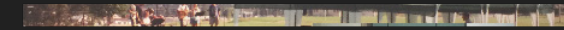


SunRidge Community Church

OUR STORY SO FAR

SR



20



I will remember the deeds of the Lord: yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago. I will consider all your works and meditate on all your mighty deeds.” Your ways, God, are holy. What god is as great as our God? You are the God who performs miracles; you display your power among the peoples.

Psalms 77:11-14 NIV

SunRidge's first baptism.
December 21, 1997

INTRODUCTION

You know how it is in life, the years go by and things that seemed so important at one point get pushed into the past by what new seasons bring. It is easy to forget, isn't it?

God, knowing this about us, continually called people to write things down. There is something about putting a pen to paper that helps us see things a lot more clearly. Beyond that, what we record helps the next generation learn from what we have learned of how God interacted with our story all along, pointing — always pointing — to His faithfulness.

In our 20th year as a church community, it seems appropriate that SunRidge would write things down as accurately as possible to capture what this journey has been — thus far.

This booklet outlines the story of SunRidge and outlines a bit of the GREAT EFFORT that has been made over the 20 years to “lead people to become passionately committed followers of Jesus.” May this timeline serve as a reminder of what has been, and encourage the church to build on this foundation in the years to come with URGENCY, prayer and trust, finding new and more effective ways to love Jesus, love people, and live mission.

Our intention isn't just to reminisce, but to give an account to those who will continue this story, pointing — always pointing — to God's faithfulness.

For the purposes of this booklet we have given an overview of the years at SunRidge. There are many details that have not been mentioned, including most names. If a name is mentioned, it is only to provide clarity. There is no way to list one name without overlooking 10 others because the story of SunRidge is the story of a collective and the effort of many.



OUR MAP

- 1. Rose Valley Elementary School
- 2. Comfort Inn
- 3. Hudson Road Elementary School
- 4. Mount Boucherie Secondary School
- 5. SunRidge Centre
- 6. Present Location

1997-

1999

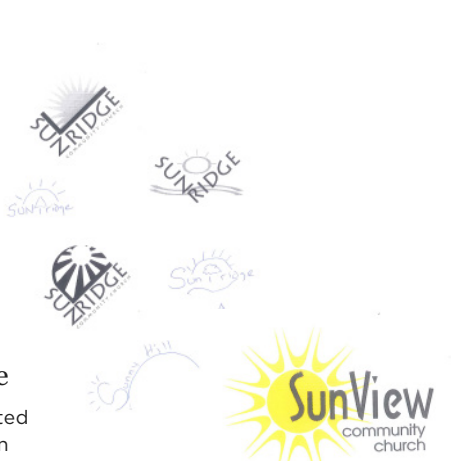


MAY 1997

Picture something new here

Michael and Teresa Klassen were contacted by the Mennonite Brethren Denomination to come and see what they were seeing: people were moving to "Westbank" (now West Kelowna) and the city was growing. There was a need for a new kind of church community to begin, a church family who would invite unchurched people to come and see and hear about Jesus.

The Klassens met the MB Leadership and drove the area, catching the vision! They sensed God nudging them, asking, "Who will reach out to these families if you don't start this church?" They looked at each other and said, "Let's go."



JULY 1997

A church for the unchurched, what's that?

The Klassens' packed up late one night and moved to West Kelowna without any clue of how it all would go or who, if anyone, would join them. Actually, one person did link up right away: Violet Neumann (Teresa's mother). She felt called to come and join in on this adventure and so SunRidge had one of its first partners.

WESTSIDE WEEKLY, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 27, 1997

WESTSIDE

A church for the churchless

■ Young couple launches church that aims to appeal to families like theirs

By MARY TRACEY
Westside Weekly

"A church for people who have given up on church" is how pastor Mike Klassen describes the Westside's newest church.

Klassen, his wife, Teresa, and their young family have just moved to the Westside from Chilliwack to start a new church in the area. Their goal is to build a family-oriented church for people who may or may not consider themselves religious.

The Klassens, who are both in their 30s, explained their desire to offer people a church that is relevant to today's society.

"Sun Ridge Community Church might be quite different from what some people remember church as," he said. "This is a church for those who have given up on church. The music will be similar to the music people of our age have grown up with. The message will be easy to understand. We want people to enjoy it and yet be challenged."

Klassen stressed the importance of a friendly church.

"We want to be friendly and inviting, but don't want people to feel targeted if they visit us," he said. With a number of churches already located on the Westside, Klassen believes there is room for more.

He noted the area's population exceeds 20,000 and there are plenty of opportunities for his church to get involved in the community.

"I believe it is important for a church to be community minded," he said. "Not all churches are."

The Sun Ridge Community Church has already started putting roots down. With the help of a senior high youth group from Chilliwack, they held a kids day camp at Rose Valley Elementary. The camp ran two hours each morning for a week.

"The kids had a ball," Klassen said. "There were 40 smiling, laughing children playing games, singing songs and doing crafts with a team of youth leading the way."

Klassen intends to offer children's programs at the new church.

"It is important for people to be able to come, sit and enjoy themselves while knowing their children are being cared for," he said.

The next community event to be hosted by Sun Ridge is a Mexican Fiesta on Saturday, "Mexican Marchés", along with games and music for the whole family will begin at 6:30 p.m. at Rose Valley Elementary School.

The first service will be held on Thanksgiving weekend, Oct. 12, at 10:30 a.m.

Klassen explains the emphasis of the weekend service is to be real and relevant, dealing with issues that matter.

"The church will be creative in its approach with the use of drama, multi-media, music, teaching that people can relate to, and an exciting children's program," he said. He is looking forward to their first service.

"We've been meeting a lot of people wanting to get involved," he said. "Some are Christians, some are not. Some merely want to learn and understand what Christianity is all about."

For more information, or to RSVP for the Mexican Fiesta, call Mike or Teresa Klassen at 760-7612.

Mike and Teresa Klassen and their family have moved from the Fraser Valley to the Westside to launch a new church, Sun Ridge Community Church, in October.

KIP FRANK/Westside Weekly

Westside bus service

INVESTORS! OUTLAWS!

Sherrin's Travel Inc.

Sherrin C. Stewart
Appointment Travel Services
Travel Consultant

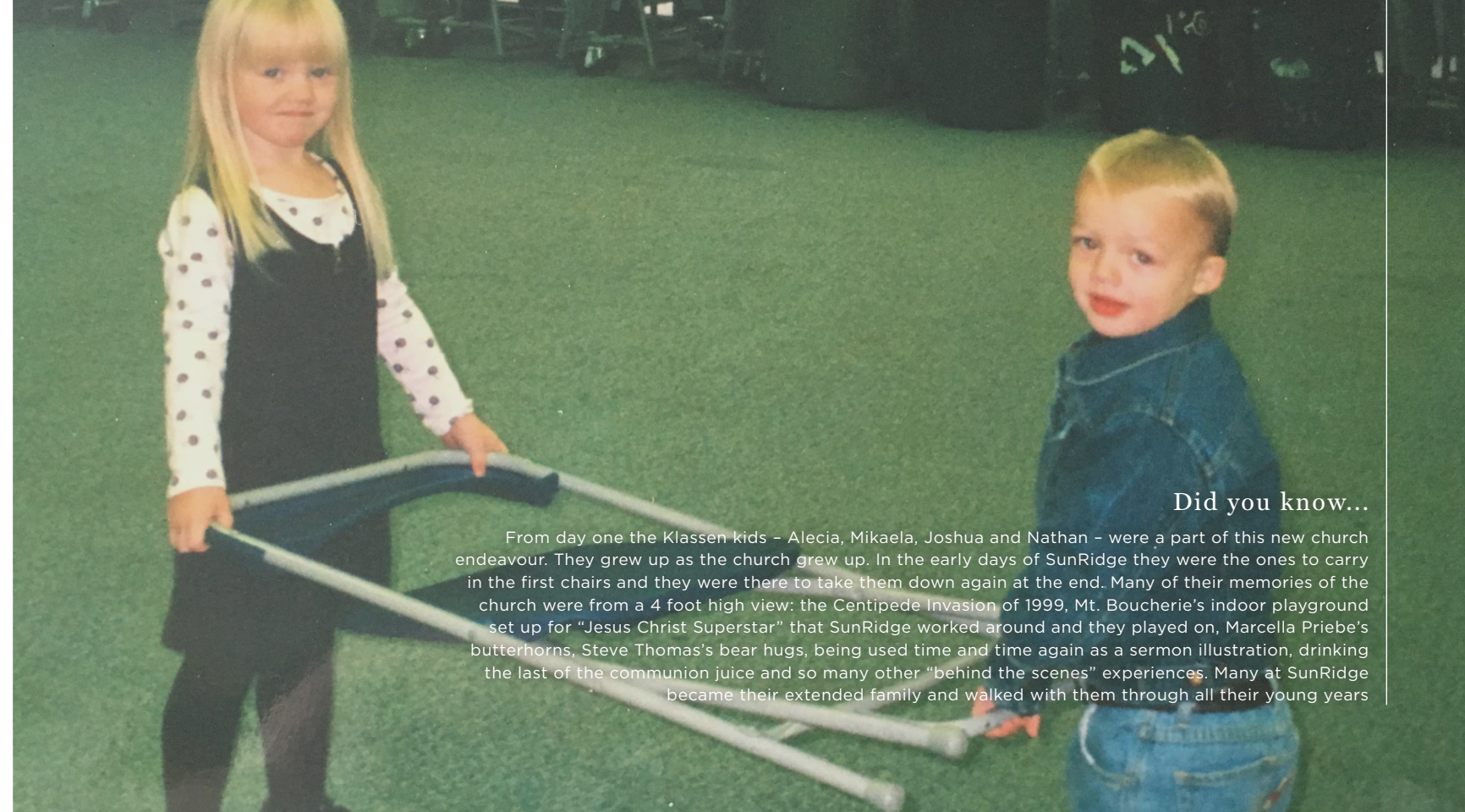
HAWAIIAN HOLIDAYS A SPECIALITY
"PREFERRED AGENT"
Appointed by the New Zealand



Where to begin...?

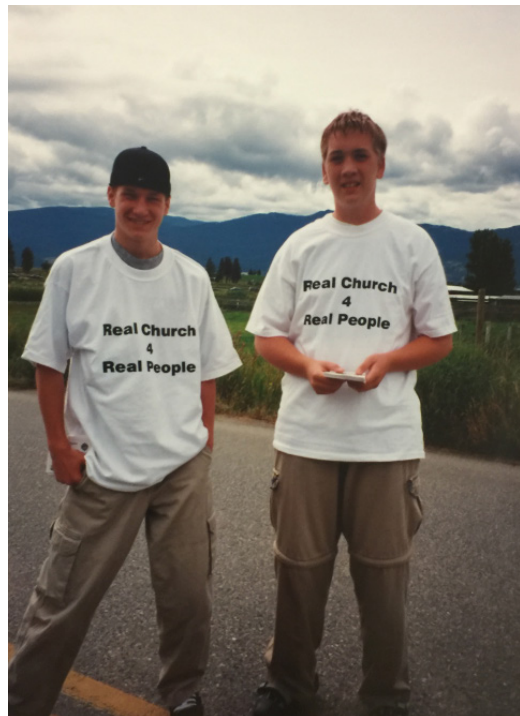
It wasn't like the Klassen's were greeted with a line-up of people just waiting for a new church to start. Most people who were in a church were content to stay there and people who weren't in a church were leery about joining up with one. That gave the Klassen an idea.

One of the things they did was to survey the community about why they wouldn't want to go to church. They took the top reasons and created a response to each in a series of flyers. Ten-thousand flyers were sent out to West Kelowna homes each week for 6 weeks prior to the first SunRidge service. Each flyer invited people to attend a "Real Church 4 Real People." Interest in the community began to stir.



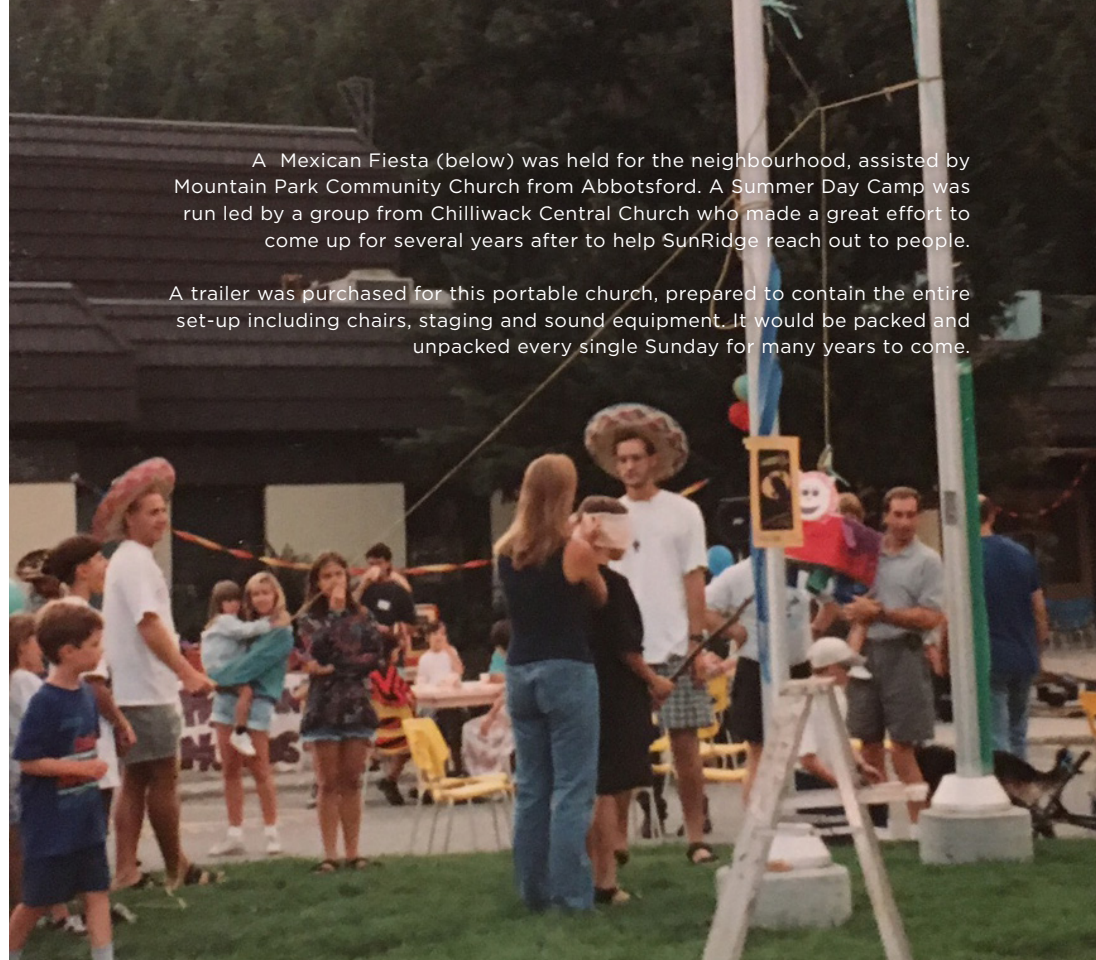
Did you know...

From day one the Klassen kids – Alecia, Mikaela, Joshua and Nathan – were a part of this new church endeavour. They grew up as the church grew up. In the early days of SunRidge they were the ones to carry in the first chairs and they were there to take them down again at the end. Many of their memories of the church were from a 4 foot high view: the Centipede Invasion of 1999, Mt. Boucherie's indoor playground set up for "Jesus Christ Superstar" that SunRidge worked around and they played on, Marcella Priebe's butterhorns, Steve Thomas's bear hugs, being used time and time again as a sermon illustration, drinking the last of the communion juice and so many other "behind the scenes" experiences. Many at SunRidge became their extended family and walked with them through all their young years



Did you know...

"Real Church 4 Real People" seemed like such a catchy phrase until one day someone said they thought it meant that SunRidge was a "real church with four real people." Drat.



OCTOBER 1997

Could we borrow you for a minute?

The brochures were out, a date was set for the first SunRidge gathering but how do you start a church with no one beside you? Who would greet people? Who would take care of the kids? Who would help to lead worship? Without a committed core group, the Klassens decided SunRidge would borrow people to fill these roles and along the way, when people who were coming would see what a “a church for the unchurched” could be like, maybe they would join in and slowly SunRidge would become a community that could stand on its own feet.

Calling them “SWAT” teams – Michael and Teresa asked for volunteers from other churches who would be willing to serve on worship teams and in children’s ministry etc. on a temporary basis. We are so grateful for every individual and church who supported the beginning of this church in different ways. There are too many to mention, but it was with their support, faith and encouragement that SunRidge began.

SunRidge’s first service was at Rose Valley Elementary School (Next page), October 12, 1997. One hundred and forty people showed up that first week. The next week there were 70 and then 35 (a predictable pattern in what is called a “cold start”). Some weeks there were more, some weeks a lot less and some people stuck with this fledgling church and were “regulars” at the Sunday gathering.



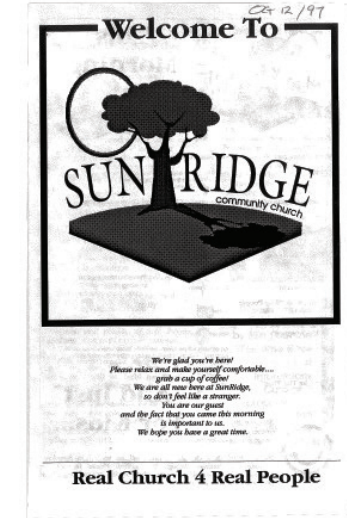
SWAT Team Article

When the pool of SWAT volunteers dried out, the era of the “Korg” began. Pastor Mike led worship using an electronic box he pre-programmed with all the parts of a worship band. When the church lacked a guitar player he programmed it in on the Korg, when no drummer was available he programmed that in. The song had to be done exactly as programmed with no room for improvising! It was SunRidge’s “Band an a Box.” (Below)



In addition, in the first few years of SunRidge 6 individuals wrapped their hearts around the vision of SunRidge and moved to West Kelowna to help advance the work of this church.

SunRidge would stay at Rose Valley until December 21 when it became obvious driving the hills in winter was a deterrent to people attending.



The first bulletin

First SunRidge Gathering



Did you know...

SunRidge loves baptisms! When people decide to follow Jesus and choose to be baptized as a believer and follower, it is worth celebrating! SunRidge's first Baptism was celebrated on December 21, 1997 using a rented hot-tub. It arrived on a trailer and was parked in front of the school, warming up for after the service.

It was a bit of a surprise when it came with a huge Flashbacks Cabaret banner plastered on the front and a palm tree! The people who attended agreed that it suited this new church. That day three people were baptized. Since then SunRidge has had baptisms in hotel pools, private pools, portable pools, but most often in the lake

no matter what the temperature is or what the weather is like! At SunRidge, we think there is nothing better than hearing people's stories of life transformation followed by "believer's baptism." At the 20 year mark we have celebrated 146 people who have been baptized.

Image: 2017



The 2nd Baptism, 1998



Baptism, 2010



JANUARY 1998 Noisy Church

SunRidge left Rose Valley and found a nice conference room to meet in at the Comfort Inn just off Highway 97. The Sunday gathering was held in a conference room and children's ministry was held in a few hotel rooms ("10 little monkeys jumping on the bed" was popular during this phase of the church). All went well until management called a meeting. "We have a 100% Satisfaction Guaranteed policy," they began, "and your music is waking the guests up. You're going to have to nix the music." It was near the end of June and it was time to find another home.



JUNE 1998 Church without walls (literally)

Where to go now? SunRidge had something in the works but needed to find a location temporarily for the summer months. There was a really nice field and playground at Hudson Road Elementary School. The field could be seen from the highway, was easily accessible, and the summer weather made this idea seem not entirely crazy.

It was decided and SunRidge set up on the Hudson Road Elementary School field for 12 weeks with a generator, tents, and chairs. The team walked downhill to set up early every Sunday morning which meant an uphill climb at hot high noon to put everything away. SunLand (our children's ministry) was held on the playground, a nursery was constructed out of some portable fencing to create a little pen for toddlers, and refreshments were served week to week to keep everyone cool and happy. Neighbours would pop by or set up on their lawns to listen to the music, and all-in-all it was a great summer. To be honest...it was a ton of work and for those involved, it was generally understood that we would never do that again!

Did you know...

SunRidge has had so many people who have been committed “heart and soul,” even when the ask is a little...different. During this summer of outdoor church, SunRidge had planned a community event on the field (another Mexican Fiesta) on a Saturday and it required a lot of setup. Rather than tearing down and setting most of it back up the next day for church, Pastor Mike and a friend decided to sleep overnight to watch over everything. The one thing they didn't count on? The massive sprinklers that shot up at 2 a.m.! Picture them, startled awake in the middle of the night, running around trying to cover the sound equipment and chairs with plastic and laughing hysterically. It has been said many times over the years: “Only at SunRidge.”

SEPTEMBER 1998 - 1999

Settle down a bit

Beginning in September, SunRidge found a new home at Mt. Boucherie Senior Secondary with the invaluable assistance of a highschool teacher employed there. Their large, bright multi-purpose area had room for lots of people and there was no shortage of classrooms for children's ministry.

In addition, office and mid-week meeting space was rented. It was called The SunRidge Center and was used for all the things that were growing outside of Sunday's Gathering.

SunRidge began to invite people to grow in their walk with Jesus. This little church didn't just want to accumulate a following, but to become a group of passionately committed followers of Jesus.

New Community was started (a mid week service for worship, communion, prayer); Mercy Hampers were assembled for people in need; Men's Coffee & Discussion groups met weekly; students were invited to a Youth Drop-in. SunRidge partnered with other ministries such as the Gathering Place in Kelowna and SHARE (a strategy to match gifts/talents from local churches to local needs) and more. The Alpha course was run throughout the year; a community connection was started called “Carseats to Kindergarten”; “Forging Strong Relationship” seminars were led by SunRidge at Mt. Boucherie and more.

The Small Group ministry was started in 1999, believing that “life transformation happens best in Small Groups.”

A 30 foot high gigantic black poly curtain...

The room we used for Sunday's Gathering at Mt. Boucherie had a wall of floor to ceiling windows which made it too bright for the words of our music to show up on screen. The solution? We bought a GIGANTIC piece of black poly and created a curtain out of it (approx. 100 feet long by 30 feet high). We attached this to a long rope that ran the length of the curtain with some extra with a ball at each end of the rope. It was someone's job on Sunday to throw the ball over some rafters on either end so that the curtain could be pulled up for the beginning of the service to block the light and then lowered noisily to the ground during “half time” when the music was done. It was hilarious.

VCR to VCR video clips...

SunRidge was determined that Sunday gatherings would be as understandable and inviting as possible to any and all who came. Video clips were pieced together (in the first year, literally VCR to VCR), stories were told, drama sketches were written; there was a constant brainstorming happening to bring creativity to the gathering. The words said on stage were sifted to make sure they weren't confusing to anyone. Songs that were sung were regularly explained. A lot of energy was poured into being a church for the unchurched and to keep what we did and said...real.

Halftime...

In the first 20 years of SunRidge we almost always had a “half time” on a Sunday morning. This started for a few reasons. First, it was a way for parents to take their children to SunLand without missing anything in the service. Secondly, it provided an excellent opportunity for people to meet others and not just “come and go.” It was a good thing but it created problems of its own: it was almost impossible to get people to sit down again in a timely manner. All kinds of creative things were tried to just get people to return to their seats! For the first twenty years we saw this as a good problem. We will see what happens in the next 20.

2000-

2004

“BE” THE CHURCH

Great effort

If there was one thing SunRidge didn't want to see slip into the background, it was the call for followers of Jesus to be salt and light in West Kelowna. Over the years, a “great effort” has been made to call people to this over and over again. In this time period SunRidge called people to a “Contagious Christianity” campaign. This was a hands on effort to help our people think more intentionally about the relationships God had placed them in and how He might want to use them to share the love of Christ!

Seven

New ideas came forward for how we could connect with people in West Kelowna. “Seven” ran once a month at the SunRidge Center (at 7 pm on Fridays). It was a combination of music and dessert, a place to come as adults and build friendships. The place was regularly packed!

Making sure people are met

People who came to SunRidge's gatherings really mattered. An email was sent out every week called “Interact” to all those who volunteered. Things like this were said, “Did anyone meet the lady who was sitting in the back row left?” and someone would reply, “I did, we are going for coffee tomorrow.” Those who saw themselves as a SunRidger were very intentional about making sure people were met, cared for and known.

A Swiss Army Knife

A few descriptions sum up what it has been like to work and serve at SunRidge. One phrase commonly used has been “Swiss Army Knife.” This phrase has summed up the staff and volunteers at SunRidge who have normally never had just “one job.” People have faithfully taken on more than one role and have worked outside of their comfort zone, often for years, to make sure the church community was taken care of. Another word often heard has been “simplify.” SunRidge has tried to be realistic about what it can and can't do but improvising has characterized this church. Many things we wanted to do, we did...we just simplified how it was done and with what materials.

Just make it happen

With what we had SunRidge just “made it happen.” There were regular guest lunches, SunRidge partnered with AIA to run basketball camps for kids; at this stage SunRidge partnered with Young Life for its weekly youth group; SunRidgers served at the foodbank, ran a float in the annual Westside Daze parade (and won three years in a row), served at the Gospel Mission and led our first Short Term Outreach trip to Mexico during this time.

SOLD! Property purchased

The rates at Mt. Boucherie were raised significantly and it was time to find a different space to meet on Sundays. A number of interesting properties were considered and finally the property and building at 1190 Stevens road was chosen. It was a 7,000 square foot building on 2 acres which SunRidge purchased in 2001.





Our building had a dirt floor

This building was the former “Butterfly World” tourist complex. The “auditorium” had a dirt floor, the roof was full of skylights – it was a big indoor garden filled with butterflies and cocoons. Surrounding the building were gardens and grapevines. SunRidge came along and believed it could be a campus for the church. SunRidge did not have the money to buy it at the time for the price of \$415,000. The owner allowed the building to be sold for \$315,000 with the agreement that an additional \$100,000 would be paid in 2006 with no interest charged. SunRidge paid this back in five years with a great deal of gratitude to the owner for his trust and generosity. The Canadian MB Conference gave us a mortgage for \$315,000 with a very reasonable payment plan and 14 SunRidge families donated \$50,000 to renovate the building. Willowpark Church in Kelowna bought the chairs still in use 20 years later.



A look back to move ahead

SunRidge began this new chapter by reminding the church community of the original vision for SunRidge in an “Our Dream” series. It would not do to lose sight at this point of why SunRidge was here. SunRidge existed to lead people to become passionately committed followers of Jesus!

S.O.A.P.

Prayer and journaling

SunRidge had started early morning prayer at the SunRidge Center and continued here in the new facility. Prayer meetings were held weekly at 6:00 am. It was only one of the many ways SunRidge nudged people to pray. There was a prayer team, there were prayer circles regularly in the Sunday gathering, there was pre-and-post-service prayer, we taught on it, led classes on it. It was always a challenge in front of us: how do we get people to pray?



From day one, SunRidge's leaders strove to teach the community to love the Word of God and to personally engage with it. We continually drew this important practice to the churches attention and invited people to walk alongside and learn how to. In 2002 we came across the most practical and simple way to take in God's word and apply it. It's called S.O.A.P and we still teach it.



SNL

In this new space Sunday Night Live – a worship and prayer night – was held on the last Sunday of the month; a class called 212 was started (the boiling point of water) – designed to help equip people to have effective and impacting lives. Growing Together was a class to help people understand a Biblical world view and the mission and vision of SunRidge. SunRidge walked through the 40 Days of Purpose to better understand themselves and God's call on their life.



First Community Christmas Dinner, 2002

FIRSTS

Community Christmas Dinner

SunRidge held its first Community Christmas Dinner in 2002.

Doing Church as a Team

DCAT was introduced for the first time – Doing Church as a Team. It became the way SunRidge organized teams. It was all about people moving away from doing/leading things alone, to teaming up and working together.

Internship

The staff began to invite Interns to serve on the team and train and equip them for ministry. Several interns went on to employment at SunRidge. Wanting to invest in young/new leadership became a priority.

The Leadership Team

Towards the end of the first year in 1998, SunRidge was intentionally forming the first Leadership Team. SunRidge was never meant to be a solo effort, but a church well led by godly men and women. The first team was called an “advisory team.” Very soon after, the first official Leadership Team was formed and given the Biblical responsibility to lead as Elders to be overseers of this church. Over the years many men and women have served in this capacity with commitment, diligence and grace through calm waters and stormy seas. They have borne the burdens and have celebrated SunRidge's steps.

20005-

20009

THE DARK AGES

The timeline would be incomplete if we did not include the reality of hardship. Every year SunRidge has had challenges. We have had ups and downs. We have had people who have loved this church community and have stayed at the table even when the waters have been rough, and some who left disappointed, disillusioned and hurt. There have been years that have been marker years in terms of hard things. These are years we look back on as having had significant difficulties that were heavy for this church to bear.

As this church continues to pursue its vision, we know this is not the end of hard things.

“Church, you will make mistakes — learn from them. Stay soft and teachable and be steadfast.”

MISTAKES, LESSONS AND CHARACTER BUILDING

2005 marked the beginning of a very difficult season at SunRidge. As the church walked through this time, stabilizing was extremely challenging. It was “1 step forward, 2 steps back.”

The Reveal Survey

While the church was figuring itself out, we also took a survey called REVEAL and it wasn't encouraging. The REVEAL survey highlighted a disconnect between what leadership was pointing to and where the heart of the church community was actually at. There was a waning in SunRidge's desire to reach out to people who did not know Jesus. This was very concerning to leadership and they began drawing this to the attention of the church in a concerted way.

A Full House

Towards 2008 the “house” was full and leaders began to prepare the church to move towards 2 services, but some did not support the decision the Leadership Team had made so it did not lift off. There was “fall out” from this as well. It was a confusing time.

Financial Troubles

Financial troubles followed at SunRidge – the bank account was down to \$0. SunRidge Leaders united with prayer and faith and strength and courage and pushed through. It was from this testing, new leadership convictions and commitment grew.



OUT-OF-SCHOOL-CARE

Our SunLand Director at the time envisioned and pioneered the SunRidge Out of School Care Program (OOSC) beginning with 8 children, picking them up from Rose Valley Elementary School with SunRidge's first "White Wagon" (15 passenger van, donated by Green Bay Bible Camp). OOSC became a significant outlet for our church to love families in our area in many practical ways.

THINGS GROW IN HARD PLACES TOO

The 3 C's

During this time SunRidge partnered with C2C - engaging with church planting endeavours across Canada. SunRidge financially began to support camp ministry, church planting (through C2C) and Biblical training through our BC Bible College (Columbia Bible College)

Our Portable

A great blessing to SunRidge, the portable outside was donated for student ministry by MTF (now known as "Big Box Outlet"). This served and continues to serve as a great gathering place for students and many other groups.

3D Living

SunRidge walked through a learning campaign called "Just Walk Across the Room", challenging SunRiders to think through their story, what God had done in their lives, and how they would share that story of hope with others. We still regularly refer to 3D living, calling SunRiders to live intentionally and to think about how they can be a living example of Jesus' love in the lives of their friends, co-workers and neighbours. Are we making an effort to not live isolated lives (Developing Relationships)? Do we make an effort to know people on more than a surface levels (Discovering stories)? Are we investing in peoples lives in practical and meaningful levels (Discerning next steps)? We are called to stand out in the world, walking across the room to care for people.

Did you know...

C2C evolved from the group that originally called Michael and Teresa to start a church in West Kelowna. At that time it was known as the BOCE (Board of Church Extension). Things have really changed in the world of "church planting." Now young leaders are supported in a whole new and much healthier way. The BOCE changed to become Church Planting BC as it moved from a one denomination effort to a "many denominations" effort. As it moved beyond BC to all of Canada and now into the USA, the name was changed to C2C. The C2C network exists to be a catalyst for church planting and multiplication across North America. Their movement is built on a solid trust and dependence upon the Spirit of God. They pray for workers, for finances, and for the appropriate locations and strategies, and God is answering those prayers! SunRidge contributes financially and prays for the C2C and the "church planters" in this network every week.

One Person Leads to Another

Everything at SunRidge began with an idea and involved a pioneer leader. Their work was picked up and then added to by another. Our SunLand and Youth ministry are still big priorities at SunRidge because lots of volunteers and several staff have shown such devotion. So many kids and youth have been impacted because each person led to another and kept the vision alive!



SunLand Christmas Production

2009
San Francisco
Youth Missions Trip



2010-

2014

REACHING OUT GLOBALLY AND LOCALLY

SunRidge believes in Short Term Outreaches to other parts of our country and world. SunRidge has sent teams to Vancouver, Edmonton, San Francisco, Las Vegas, Mexico, and India.

Adventuring in India!

SunRidge defined its global missions emphasis, beginning a partnership with Child of Mine, supporting and working with two children's homes in Northern India. Annual construction trips and/or prayer and awareness trips have been sent to India, along with fundraising for this mission.

Child of Mine is a charitable organization from Canada partnering with children's homes in India. SunRidge and three other churches have come alongside the homes in such a way that we can bring value to their vision; raising future leaders to love and serve India. Our purpose in partnering with Child of Mine is to ensure this vision is carried out by raising support, sending help their way, partnering individually with Child of Mine, praying regularly for them, and doing what we can to encourage and foster local self sustainability.



Serving Locally

Locally SunRidge formalized serving opportunities and/or financial partnerships with local social services (Foodbank, the Kelowna Gospel Mission) and also practically served the community through Love West Kelowna (this was started at this time, serving our city at the request of the Mayor). SunRidge drew attention to hunger in our world through "The 5 Day Challenge" where we lived in a poverty state for 5 days to identify with 2/3 of the world. A GO team was organized and GO trips happened to expose SunRidgers to needs in our own area and just beyond in Vancouver.

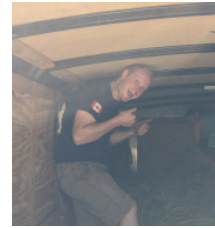
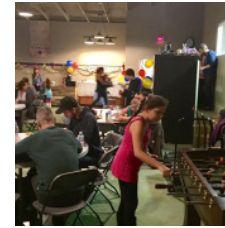


2015-
Present

WHO ARE WE NOW?

Over the years some things stand out about SunRidge, pointing to who we were and who we are at the core. This time in our life became a defining season, pulling forward what really mattered to us and what we felt called to.

We asked, "What will we make a big deal of down the road?" SunRidge will make a big deal about Jesus. We will create open/real environments for any and all to belong. We will teach the Gospel and equip people to engage our city with the Gospel.



Love Jesus

LOVE JESUS

“Pursuing a personal relationship with Jesus through a devotional life is the true essence of our faith and essential in life transformation.”

A Church of Devotions

The emphasis on personal devotions and prayer was the right call at the beginning and was the right call at the 20th year for this church community. SunRidge knew 20 years ago it would not see people grow in their walk with Jesus without this practice being alive and active. SunRiders who engage in personal devotions and prayer display a maturity that can only come through this kind of practice. At the 20th year SunRidge leaders persisted in calling people to a meaningful devotional life with a journal, a Bible, a pen and a reading guide.

A Church of Prayer

It was obvious too, SunRidge needed to be called and equipped to pray more. SunRidge could not be a church “with” prayer but needed to be a church “of” prayer. Saturated with prayer.

21 Days of Prayer

21 Days of Prayer was started in this season. SunRidge walked through “The Story” for a year (a beginning to end look at the Bible) to help people see the big picture of Scripture. In 2017 SunRidge embarked on a journey through the book of Luke and his account of the life of Jesus. This will be completed after a year and a half in 2018. Pre-Service prayer was lifted with more energy, post-service prayer was lifted with more intentionality, training in prayer was given a new priority.

Love People

LOVE PEOPLE

“To know and be known, to need and to be needed, recognizing that God has designed us to life in deep relationship with others.”

Small Groups

SunRidge saw that in order for people to really be known and celebrated and grown, Small Group connection had to happen. In 2017, finding and equipping “shepherds” to disciple people was still a front-burner priority.

Events

Believing in community building “events,” SunRidge prioritized some of them. Things like Greenbay Family Camp were seen as invaluable (an annual overnight camp for SunRidgers, to build relationships in our own church family). Soup Sundays were led monthly by the Hospitality Team to draw people together; Starting Point and other classes were led to connect, equip and train people in a collaborative setting.

Live Mission

LIVE MISSION

“To reach out to people living out and lifting up the Gospel by using our time, treasure and talents even when inconvenient.”

5-3-2

SunRidge was challenged to not let this lag! What were we here for in this community if not to reach people with the good news of Jesus? Small groups were encouraged to follow a 5-3-2 rhythm (5 in the living room, 3 out serving our neighbours, 2 celebrating together socially)

OOSC

SunRidge Out of School Care was to full capacity with a license for 30 children with close to 50 children on the list of those connected to the program, now picking up children from three schools. Over the years OOSC gave and continues to give SunRidge many opportunities to love families in West Kelowna.

Local and Global

The youth group was connecting and engaging with the city and world's poor and homeless. Teams were still going to India and Mexico as our SunRidge focus, with many other individuals branching out, engaging locally and globally in other countries and missions. SunRidge continued to serve the city through Love West Kelowna.

Kitchen Facility

In order to serve our mission of loving and serving those who we connected within our community, renovating parts of our building became a priority. A new Kitchen replaced a small and inadequate staff room. The outside of the building became more inviting as we replaced the old and tired roof and siding. Rooms were given fresh coats of paint and other projects were in the works.

15th Annual Christmas Dinner

The 15th Community Christmas Dinner was held. In addition an increase in community connection events similar to the community Christmas dinner were hosted throughout the year to build relationships further (Games nights, Block parties etc.)

A CLOSING THOUGHT

SunRidge has been on a journey over mountains and through valleys, across the plains and deserts and at no time did our Father ever leave us, nor withhold His mercy from us. There have been times when we have been in stride with Him, and times when we have been out of step and He always reached out, took hold of us and set us right once more. He has shown his love to this local church and has kept calling us to follow.

SunRidge, this timeline doesn't capture all of the events of 20 years – but it does give you a glimpse into the journey. This history matters, but even more important is what will be done with the next 20. May SunRidgers walk with an URGENCY in their steps and may the first 20 years pale in comparison to the GREAT EFFORT put into the next 20.

“Stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourself fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.” 1 Corinthians 15:58



SunRidge Community Church
20th Anniversary 2017

www.sunridge.org