



God's Provisions to Date

Several great things have happened in answer to our prayers and yours since our last newsletter in Jan.

We had a successful Preview Phase. You might be wondering what that means? Our Preview Phase was a stretch of time, from this Jan to this Mar, when we filled up on vision, planned and trained up for fulltime Sunday Morning Gathering Ministry. It was also a time for us to figure out how to put a public face on what the Holy Spirit had been shaping us into since last Sept.

In our Preview Phase we were to reach a goal of raising all of our first year start-up costs - \$42,000! Among other important things, these funds have allowed us to purchase much of the equipment and gear we needed to get started for regular Sunday Worship.

As of this past Easter we are fully launched for the public. We've been full time in our new Sunday morning home, Landmark Cinemas in the University Heights Mall near UVic. This has been an amazing venue for us and we're averaging 50-60 in attendance. We've even been as high as 85. We're not in a really big theatre, only holding 177, so many Sunday's it feels busy and on the fuller side. Landmark has 4 theatres, and as we grow over time we will move into one of the larger theatres seating 265.



We're grateful for our local news and media in Saanich as they've given us some amazing coverage. Nearly all of that coverage was sparked by our Clothesline Event. This past March we set up an event that was like a food bank but with clothing. For about 3 months we put out the word and gathered good quality used clothing, washed and folded, then setup something like a department store, a big barbecue, and we had a 100 people walk through. Many stayed to visit with us, enjoyed hotdogs, coffee, treats for the kids, and free Cobs Bread. All of which Saanich News and Chek TV covered for us.

They even announced in a positive way that we were starting a new church! This has created a significant amount of initial awareness for our new church.

We have much to be grateful for, and we're in awe of what Jesus is doing for us, in us, and through us.

Needs that Remain

We're now in our Launch Phase, which is the stretch of time from April to Aug where we go into hyper missionary mode. Spreading the word. Inviting people. Gaining a more consistent awareness and traction in our community. And ... simply living life on life with each other and those who need to know Jesus. While it's a real joy, it's also a real challenge. Please continue to pray for us.

Top of the list: We want to earnestly follow Jesus, lift him up, spread his news as far and wide as the Spirit permits us, gain a lot more traction, grow our core to a solid 60-80 coming into this fall.

As a key factor in growth, we want to hold a second baptism event, this time at Cadboro-Gyro Park, which has a really nice park area and beach off the ocean. Baptisms to us are the sign that people are responding to the gospel of Jesus, and salvation is the number one fruit of the Spirit we're looking for.

Lastly, we need to become self-sustaining in the next two years. In addition to the external support we receive each month, we're currently at 50% of what we need to generate internally to meet our operating budget. We need new believers among us to learn the importance of regular giving, and also, for new people to join us who can financially help support our new church. By the end of the fall we want to be at a 100% of what we planned for internally so that we can use 2018 to try and become financially independent. Thank you for your generosity to date. It's been amazing. Please pray for us in this way, and please continue to support us financially as we work by faith toward our financial goals.

Let me conclude with a story that represents gospel fruit we're seeing, and new stories that are emerging each month. Leanne and I lead a Community Group in our home. It's made up of a core of committed believers, some neighbors who are not yet believers, as well as some others from nearby neighborhoods. A few weeks ago, as we were sharing stories from our first year together as a Community Group and what it has meant to us, one fellow who brings his family out each week, but is not yet a follower of Jesus, shared that this is what real family is supposed to be like. Wow! I expect to see him in the waters of baptism real soon. Thank you Jesus, you are good!

Until next time,
Robin.

Robin Martens
Church Planter
West Village Church - Saanich
250 202 8436
robin@westvillagechurch.com

