

80 Years of Welcome

THE STORY OF LIVING WATERS CHURCH

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PREFACE



In 1940, Living Waters didn't have a place to call home except for what could be found in the hearts of its early founders. Eighty years later, not only is there a place to call home, but a place in a thousand hearts that would say this is my house and this is my family.

It seems right in this 80th year to look back and remember those who went before us and celebrate how the Lord has worked through many faithful followers. Not unlike any other church with a long history, there have been moments of strength and moments of weakness, times of thriving and times of struggle. Through it all, our church has known the faithful presence of the Lord and has learned that when we make Him central to our lives and seek His agenda and not our own – amazing things happen.

I have written this small book with a great degree of trepidation. First, I'm not an historian and while I have basic research skills, I cannot attest to the absolute detailed accuracy of everything I've written. I've done my best and am more than happy to add or delete for the sake of accuracy as new points of history are discovered or clarified. I have informally listed my sources at the end of the book.

Secondly, I fear in naming some names, I have missed others. Please forgive me if you fit into the latter category. Similarly, this document is in no way meant to be exhaustive and cover all of the significant events in our church's history. There are vast stretches of time that offer no detail. I have highlighted only those seasons from which information is available and that I think help to tell our story. I know there is much more that could and may yet be written.

My thanks to each of the contributors to this book and in particular Ken Gaglardi who gave me permission to freely glean from his book "Miracles at Living Waters" and also provided portions of writings by Jennie Gaglardi and the Pentecostal Testimony. I am also thankful to Monica Unger and CLA for use of their photos and thanks to our District Office for allowing me access to their files. Thanks also to Dave Ludlow and Lynn Gettel for their proof reading. Finally, I am thankful for the layout skills of Reuben Kramer who has committed many hours to this project.

Above all I pray that God is the One glorified in the following pages. While He gave us the privilege to serve His church, its works and wonders are totally due to His hand and love for His people.

May you know His great grace and abundant love.

Doug

October 2020

CHAPTER 1

THE BEGINNINGS

In 1940, the Great Depression was finally ending and World War 2 was ramping up as a global conflict. William Lyon McKenzie was Canada's 10th Prime Minister and Canada's population stood at 11,506,000 people. The Fort Langley Community Hall was just nine years old.

Preceding it all was the Kwantlen Nation on whose Traditional Territory Fort Langley sits. More than one hundred years prior to 1940 the Kwantlen people had moved their main settlement from New Westminster to Fort Langley and in particular McMillan Island.

It was the late 30's when two evangelists, Jennie Sandin and Laurene Schneider, heard a call from God to reach the Langley area. Jennie had been pastoring a work in Mission with the musical help of Laurene.

A major transition was at hand for the women and Jennie spoke of it this way, "*I pastored in Mission for over 4 years. I felt it was God's will for me to move to Langley, which did not have a church. I felt led to go there and open up a church. We had a hard time leaving Mission. We had so many friends there.*" Faithful to the call of God, these two women left Mission and were instrumental in developing an early network of churches.



*Jennie Gaglardi & Laurene Drury**

A 1938 edition of the Pentecostal Testimony (The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada's national magazine) carried an article that captured their early work in Langley Prairie.

“Early in the summer of 1937 Langley District, B.C. was invaded by Pentecostal workers Miss J.M. Sandin and her co-worker, Miss Schneider. They found a vacant building, with space enough both for a small auditorium and living quarters. And so these workers settled in the small village of Langley Prairie, about twenty miles from New Westminster.”

The work in Langley was not an easy one according to Jennie. *“Laurene and I opened the church in Langley Prairie but few people attended. It couldn't be said the arms of the people in Langley opened up to us. It seems in those early days of Pentecost the people weren't too interested in church. There had been others who tried to start the work and left with a debt. The Pentecostal church did not have a very good reputation. It seems as though people wanted to believe in Pentecostal “fanatics”; that people rolled on the floor and such.”*

In time, with faith and tenacity the Langley Prairie ministry found more than its legs. It was just the beginning of what would become Christian Life Assembly today.



*Langley Prairie**

In addition, the vision of the new church went beyond a single location as Jennie and Laurene also opened branch works in Cloverdale and Fort Langley. The Cloverdale church saw some early successes and in time so did the Fort Langley church. Jennie writes, *“After our Sunday morning services (in Cloverdale) we would go to Fort Langley where we also opened a Pentecostal church. We visited the community and invited the people to come to church. Many people came and found the Lord.”*

Jennie had first met Phil Gaglardi while she ministered in Mission. Phil asked her to marry him and she agreed with a condition, he had to be willing to go to Bible school and enter the ministry with her. Phil agreed and graduated after spending a year in Bible school in Seattle. In 1939, The Pentecostal Testimony reported on their wedding and their early work together. *“Brother and Sister Gaglardi are now pastoring at Langley Prairie and from there have opened two new fields at Cloverdale and Fort Langley. BC.”*

After Phil and Jennie were married, Jennie described their work as being very full. *“Over the 5 years we were in Langley we worked very hard. Our Sundays were spent in Cloverdale in the mornings, Fort Langley in the afternoon and Langley Prairie in the evening. We held services during the week too so that meant we were in services almost every night. Phil really found his ministry when we were in Langley. The years he spent there experiencing the growth of the work and the leading of the Lord in establishing the churches was invaluable to him.”*

The Testimony magazine later posted a picture of Phil and Jennie standing with 12 baptismal candidates and their comments expressed thanks for the Lord’s work among them.

“The Lord has been very gracious to us and we wish to share His blessings with you. This is a picture of our last Baptismal service, showing the happy candidates. We thank the Lord for their salvation. Eight services weekly keep us busy in our circuit of Langley Prairie, Cloverdale and Fort Langley.”



*Phil and Jennie Gaglardi**

After a pastor was found for the growing Cloverdale church Phil and Jennie Gaglardi continued to invest faith and vision in the new work in Fort Langley along with Langley Prairie Assembly. There was no building or property in Fort Langley, only the vision to see the early church plant firmly rooted and to trust the Lord for its future. After several fruitful years of faithful service, the Gaglardis were ultimately called to a new ministry opportunity in Kamloops.

September 15th 1943 edition of the Testimony:

“It is with deep regret that the Langley Prairie Assembly and branch assembly at Fort Langley, say good-bye to Pastor and Mrs. P.A. Gaglardi.”

Phil Gaglardi went to be with the Lord in 1995 and was followed by Jennie Gaglardi in 2003. Jennie’s funeral was held at Living Waters.

CHAPTER 2

A CHURCH HOME

The Reverend Bill and Laurene Drury were the next couple to pastor the branch work in Fort Langley, which by then was called Emmanuel Pentecostal Tabernacle. Laurene Drury, formerly Schneider, was the same person who had helped establish Langley Prairie, Cloverdale and Fort Langley. Along with pastoring the Langley Prairie church, the Drury's pastored in Fort Langley from 1943 to 1949 and were instrumental in establishing the church. For its first 5 years the church built and cared for its congregation by first holding home meetings, and then services, and a popular summer vacation Bible school in the Fort Langley Community Hall. As the church grew, and the Lord spoke, there was faith to build a permanent church home.



*Drury Family**

In 1945 a property was secured on Glover Road, Fort Langley's main street. It was a large piece of land, which not only carried great potential, but also the timber that would help build the church. The generous size of the property allowed the church to sell two parcels of land which helped pay for the construction of the new building. Once the timber was cut, a small sawmill was brought to the property and used to mill the wood for the basement forms while providing the timber for the church's frame. The construction was completed soon afterwards and provided ample room for a growing congregation, including a finished basement that would serve as home for a number of the church's pastors.

In the years that followed, a bus ministry reached out to many families in the area, including Glen Valley. Pastor Drury reported that services were being held Sunday afternoon and that they would go out on Telegraph Trail and other roads to pick up people who had no way to get there. The church grew in life and number as many families called it home. In fact the basement was soon needed to house both the pastor and Sunday school rooms.

Following the departure of the Drury's in 1949, the church was pastored by a number of faith filled ministers: the Reverend Burt Sutton (the first to live in the basement) and then Hugo Johnson, Roy and Gerda Davis, Ron and Betty Preston and then Roy and Lois Webb (who saw encouraging growth in Sunday school). Over a dozen other lead pastors, and some lay leaders, followed these men and women. A listing can be found at the end of the book.

These leaders and their congregations represent many stories over the years, which have yet to be discovered and unfortunately, others that have been lost over time. To be sure, the church had life and for many served as a strong spiritual home, among them Keith and Janet Foss who were early congregants.



The Early Church

Keith started attending the church in 1952 when neighbours took him to Sunday school with his siblings. Janet called the church home from 1967 to 1974. They married and then left for Langley Pentecostal (CLA) for more opportunities for their children.

Memories of Living Waters - The Early Years – by Janet Foss

“Keith (Janet’s husband) started attending Fort Langley Pentecostal in 1952 when he and his siblings were taken to Sunday school by neighbours, the Johnsons, from Glen Valley. After a while they were part of the bus ministry, which picked up children for Sunday school in areas surrounding Fort Langley. He remembers being one of 7 kids on that large bus. He continued to attend until January 1974 when he and his family moved to Langley Pentecostal.

The first pastor Keith remembers was Roy Davis who was well liked by all. Keith remembers the Christmas Concerts, which were much anticipated in their lives, with goody bags for all the kids when they left. (In those days candy was a luxury not an everyday treat). The highlight was that all the Sunday school got to participate in the concert from the little ones to the teenagers who used to end the concerts with a short play. Also the youth would go caroling through the streets of Fort Langley at Christmas and would visit houses where they knew single adults lived. They would stand at the door and sing while it snowed.

The Sunday school picnic was another exciting event all the kids enjoyed. All ages participated in the games during the picnic, children, youth, adults and seniors. Keith remembers the 3-legged race, the egg and spoon race and the nail pounding game. Seeing all ages interacting gave him great memories and especially when the seniors won.

Church services were held Sunday morning and Sunday evenings, and Youth Group on Friday evenings. As a child Keith remembers missionaries, especially from Africa, coming to speak.



Keith and Janet Foss

Many missionaries at that time suffered and gave their lives for the gospel. He especially enjoyed once a year when the youth took the Sunday morning service, singing, giving announcements and preaching. He remembers being one of three youth preaching on Faith, Hope and Love. On Youth Sunday Keith preached on Faith and quoted scripture but still remembers forgetting Hebrews 11:1."

Janet entered the picture in 1967 when she and Keith were married. Janet recalls her early days.

"The pastors lived in an apartment in the basement of the church at 9095 Glover Road. Larry and Karin Keller and family were the last to live in this apartment. Larry, as a carpenter, put in the remodelled bathroom at the back of the church as well as built a nursery at the front of the church. Later this was used as a sound booth. It was great to have a place to stay with the babies rather than standing outside in the rain or cold when they were fussy. The pastor's suite downstairs served a double role as living quarters and overflow Sunday school room for the teens. The living room of the suite was also used for the ladies group meetings where quilts were made and quilted as well as clothes gathered for the Hay River Mission. The age span for the women's group of 11 members ranged from 18 to 81. It was good for all as younger women learned from the elders and older women enjoyed sharing stories of raising a young family. In the early 70's there was a women's outreach that met on Wednesday mornings to learn about parenting, marriage and womanhood. We could invite our neighbours and friends to attend and it gave our kids a time to play with others. It was fun to share our faith and lifestyle with others.

All ages had a Sunday school class, even the adults. There was youth group on Friday night where they met, had a social time as well as learning about developing character for life as an adult. The youth group would gather with Port Kells youth for different events such as going to the Billy Graham crusade in 1965. Keith remembers going camping with Pastor Keller and the youth to Emory Creek Provincial Park.



Bus Ministry

As the congregation was about 40 people attending at this time and very few wage earners, the pastor worked full time to support his family. He did the building maintenance, cut the grass and paid the hydro. Fort Langley was not considered a home mission at this time. In 1965 Pastor Keller got the contract to build the Royal Bank in Williams Lake and asked Keith to go along for summer work as a carpenter's assistant. He would preach on Sunday then they would leave early Monday morning to work in Williams Lake all week before leaving Friday afternoon in order to get home for weekend services. We had the greatest respect for the pastors at Fort Langley. Dan and Rose Anonby pastored from 1960 to 1962 before the Kellers, and Art and Margaret Zaporozan pastored after the Kellers with some lay preachers in between (Dave Murdock a carpenter from Mission took the Sunday services for a time.) Pastor Ron Preston and his brother Paul were instrumental in Keith's faith walk as he entered his teens. We felt supported by our pastors as a young couple.

We remember when the AIM team from the PAOC came to perform a week of evangelism in the evenings in 1972. It was exciting, as we were not used to such upbeat Christian music. I remember teenagers hearing the music and coming in off the street. My grandmother said that our church reminded her of the Methodist church she attended while growing up in England.

Life was slower in Langley in those days; a neighbour's large vegetable garden stood where the current parking lot is. Across the street was all treed. No stores except the corner stores were open on Sunday. Church meant more to us in those days, as there was less entertainment in the community. We were greeted every Sunday morning at church and afterwards the Pastor was at the door to say farewell."

CHAPTER 3

SOME DIFFICULT TIMES

In the early 70's the church suffered a loss of members and entered some difficult times. When Pastor Orst Zilinsky took on the pastorate in July of 1975 there were only 15 people attending the church, a drop of some 65 people. He noted that if the church were to see new growth it would need to place an emphasis on children and families and better facilities. He added that work needed to be undertaken with the church on outreach.

In a 1977 overview of the church written by Bill Drury, the church's second pastor, he said this about its potential for growth, *"I truly believe the church can double in size within one years time if a special effort is made to harvest the area. I am excited about Emmanuel's future and believe that with a pastor like Orst Zilinsky and his wife and the quality of the present congregation that the church has great potential."*

In March of 1976, with the basement now being used exclusively for growing Sunday school classes, there was discussion about the purchase of a doublewide mobile home that would serve as a parsonage on the church property. The used mobile home was purchased in 1977 for \$21,000.00 with \$4,500.00 set aside for improvements. It first served as home to the Zilinsky family. The amount was fully paid off in 1985.

Pastor Jim and Nives Cornock followed the Zilinskys and served from 1978 to 1986. Emmanuel Pentecostal Tabernacle was seeing a number of small but positive indicators to becoming a growing and healthy church. The annual general meeting minutes from 1985 provide some context.

“Nives Cornock reported for Women’s Ministries. 5 women regularly attend. The major project was an embroidered quilt, which was given to a couple. Meetings are held every second Tuesday of every month. The goal is to grow as women and Christians.”

“Men’s Fellowship reports a regular attendance of 5. They meet once a month on a Saturday morning for breakfast; the men take turns sharing. Their goal is to encourage and uplift one another.”

Perhaps one of the more encouraging notes came a year later in Jim Cornock’s Annual General meeting report. He said, *“The face of the church has changed. We are now a young family church. There has been an increase in children. 3 people were baptized in 1985.”*

John Caplin was a student attending Western Pentecostal Bible College. He, with the help of his wife Dawna, served as an intern under the leadership of the Cornocks. John was later to serve as senior pastor at Terrace Pentecostal Assembly and then thirteen years later as Assistant Superintendent for the BC and Yukon District of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada. In his own words he provides a unique window into the church.

“Every Bible college student needs to have an internship to graduate. So, as I entered my third year, where should I go? After some prayer the Lord impressed upon me Fort Langley Pentecostal Church (Living Waters today). Never having been there before, we arrived on the church doorstep the first Sunday of Sept 1978. Parking on Glover Street we entered the storefront style church and introduced ourselves to Pastor Jim Cornock.



John and Dawna Caplin

With some trepidation I asked “would you be open to an intern for the year?” “Yes!” he exclaimed and asked if I could lead songs that night!

This began a two-year journey of participation at Living Waters. The church was small but the people were friendly. Dorothy Humberstone, her kids and sister Shelley, the Tapps, the Harders along with the Cornocks (and others) encouraged and guided us in these early pastoral activities. We led songs, preached, taught classes, participated in VBS and went to seniors’ homes. Towards the end I was even on the steering committee. Fair to say I saw the church from every side, which gave me confidence and experience that was dearly needed.

I am incredibly grateful for the breadth of opportunity that the church offered. Pastor Jim and Nives Cornock always had food for us to share in the trailer behind the church and were generous with the ministry opportunities. Along the way we started to see other couples join us, Dave and Henny Thormoset being the most notable. Altogether my Fort Langley time was memorable and I am forever grateful for it.”

CHAPTER 4

GOD WILL BLESS THIS CHURCH

For a period of time the church was unofficially called Fort Langley Pentecostal but its first official name change came in 1988 when it went from Emmanuel Pentecostal Tabernacle to Living Waters Assembly, later affectionately dubbed LWA. The congregation at the time considered a number of names including Country Grove, Christian Fellowship Centre, Good News Fellowship, Harmony Fellowship, Wellspring Assembly and Praise Assembly. The name would see one more change in 2006 to Living Waters Church, essentially staying the same.

After a challenging season in the early nineties, two lay leaders were chosen to help guide the church. Peter Meister and Ralph Wyatt led Living Waters Assembly from 1994 to 1997. By the time 1996 rolled around things were looking more positive for the church. The District Superintendent at the time, Bill Gibson, said at the 1996 Annual Meeting that the church had been through a crisis and was in much better shape and was now ready for a pastor. A pastoral search committee was developed with these hopeful final words from Bill Gibson, *“If God blesses the ministries that are going out, then there will be growth. If you really want to see God really work be prepared for changes. As we begin to trust properly, God will bless this church.”* As the pastoral search went on a number of applicants were considered, but none were called and the church continued to wait in faith.

In the meantime, God had been speaking to Ken Gaglardi. Phil and Jennie Gaglardi, the church's first pastors, were Ken's uncle and aunt. Ken held a doctorate in Physics and his wife Eunice was a graduate from Western Pentecostal Bible College (now Summit Pacific). In his own words, Ken describes the process that brought him and Eunice to pastor Living Waters in 1998, a call that he describes as an example of the incredible patience of God.

"It probably started when I was a university student, and was working on the construction of the #1 highway. I would cross the river on the ferry at Fort Langley, and drive by the church on a daily basis. I simply got interested in the church as I drove by.

About 25 years later, when I was running my own business, which was going well, I began to hear the call of God for LWA. Most of the company sales were over the phone, and every few months, after a phone call, in which I had made a sale, the thought came into my mind, "People are going to hell, and you are just making money." This reoccurred every few months over a period of at least a couple years. I knew that it was God's call to LWA. My response was a mixture of pleasure at the thought of going, dreaming of what it could look like, wondering how it could ever happen, fear at what it might mean, wondering what Eunice would think and a fear that the district might not consider it. But I never told anyone, including Eunice (to her later disappointment) about these "conversations" with God.

A few times during this period, my path crossed with Bill Gibson's (the District Superintendent) and I would ask him how LWA was going. I listened to his concerns, but never took the conversation further. I had a whole lot of emotions including desire, fear and uncertainty. This was the extent of my response during those years.

Then, when I was 53, everything changed. One morning, in the spring of the year, as I put the phone down after making a sale, God inserted another thought into my mind.



Ken and Eunice Gaglardi

This time the message changed. It was “your biological clock is ticking and if you are ever going to do it, you need to do it now”. I knew exactly what was meant. There was never any condemnation in these thoughts, just that steady, gentle prodding of the Holy Spirit reminding me that there was an opportunity that he had prepared especially for me. But now I realized that I had to actually do something. I determined that the next time I saw Bill Gibson I would ask if I could pastor LWA. A few weeks later we met, went for a walk, and as we came back to where we were going to part and with my heart in my throat, I asked the hardest question I have ever asked. I rehearsed my usual question about what was happening at Fort Langley and then asked, “What would it take for me to pastor LWA?” Bill was incredibly gracious, asked me for my vision for the church, and agreed to pray about it. Over that weekend he, and Bill’s wife Elaine, and perhaps others, prayed and understood that this request was of God. He opened the door for us to go there and I will be eternally grateful. Much of the credit for what has happened needs to go to Him.

Well, then I had to tell Eunice. That should have been easy, but how do you tell your wife that you have kept a secret back from her for at least a few years? I told her, and she responded kindly, as I should have known. You see God had placed a call on her life for ministry many years earlier and now she would have the opportunity to step into that calling as well.

Then I had the task of dealing with the company. I had accepted that if no buyer were found, I would simply shut the doors and walk away from it. However, a buyer was found, and a deal was signed, but at the end of their due diligence period, they decided to back away. I believe God blinded their eyes to the company bank account (which I had mistakenly included in the deal) and the good will that had been established. Then the decision was made to hire a manager to run the company, which resulted in it continuing to move forward, and enabled it to cover all our financial needs for the entire time we were at LWA. God simply looked after every detail in wonderful ways. We took up the role of pastor in July of that year.”

From the beginning, Ken and Eunice had a passion to see the work of the Lord expand in Fort Langley and beyond. They worked hard to cultivate and disciple a community that had a desire to share the best news the world knows. Their mission statement said it all, “Demonstrating and Declaring That God’s Way Is the Best Way.”

CHAPTER 5

A MONUMENTAL VISION

In their early years at Living Waters the Lord birthed a monumental vision in the hearts of the Gagliardi's. They knew if the church were to grow the way they believed it could, a new and larger building would be needed. The dream was to say the least an extraordinary one. But God had called Ken and Eunice not only to pastor His people but also to literally build His church in Fort Langley. How could that happen with a small congregation and not a lot of money? In his book, "Miracles at Living Waters" Ken explains.

"The first miracle is that we had faith to begin! There were fourteen of us that voted to undertake building the new church. We had about \$100,000 in the bank, enough property to build upon, the zoning to allow us to build, the promise of some volunteer labour, and the commitment of the district that they would support our application to the international office for a mortgage of up to \$270,000 (three times our annual budget). Together those pieces came close to the estimated cost of \$474,000. So, in 1999, a motion to authorize the building on the condition that the debt limit be observed was placed before the congregation and passed on a vote of fourteen to one. Faith was expressed in the hearts of the people."



Construction of the new building that we now call home began in October of 2000 and was completed in 2004. Many people along the way provided the help needed to get the job done. Among them was Bob Gaglardi who founded Northland Properties, which includes the Sandman Hotels. Bob is the son of Phil and Jennie Gaglardi the church's first pastors and understandably had a special connection to the work started by his mom and dad so many years before. Bob provided an initial sketch of the church and then had his crew develop the formal drawings. His generosity, and that of his company, didn't end there as Sandman Hotels provided the equipment and labour for the plumbing, the electrical and sprinkler equipment along with connections with suppliers and advice whenever it was needed.

In fact, a professional who did some of Sandman's architectural work also volunteered his services to build the new church. Vic Pimiskern was born in Austria and remembered the story of The Cathedral of Living Waters, which was built in his home country 450 years ago. As the story goes the church was built after a youth, who was accidentally blinded in 1572, received a healing miracle. After losing his sight he was encouraged in a vision to go into the mountains to a particular stream and wash in its waters. His sight was miraculously restored and the church was built to remember the miracle. It is said the Cathedral has many of the same features as our Fort Langley church like the pitch of the roof, the steeple and the extended front entrance.



CHAPTER 6

A MIRACLE OF SAND

In his book, “Miracles at Living Waters” Ken provides a number of examples of miracles that ultimately led to the completion of the new church. One of many examples has to do with the lower floor that currently is home to a thriving children’s ministry. Initially the plan was to have the building built on a concrete slab with no basement but an early member of Living Waters, Ron Sloan, believed a basement should be built. After some investigation it was estimated the additional cost to the project would be in the neighbourhood of \$60,000.00; no small amount considering the project’s tight budget. At least there was some hope the sand upon which the church was being built could be sold and offset a portion of the costs. Norm Tapp, also an early member of the church, was able to find a buyer for the sand who paid \$38,300.00. That amount, when applied to the basement’s actual cost of \$41,000.00, left only a bill of \$2,700.00. As Ken writes in his book, “*We didn’t realize the extent of the miracle until later when we discovered that fifteen feet to the west of the building was “Ft. Langley brown” – a worthless loam and to the east of the new building, which is around the original church, is also worthless dirt. But in the footprint of the church there was sand.*”

You can read more about the miracles of Living Waters in Ken's book by using the link on page 66.

The very first service in the new church was held on March 25th of 2001. While not completed and without heat, with the exception of some donated kerosene heaters, the small congregation prayed and gave thanks for their new home. They also took time to write scriptures on bare 2 x 4's, which silently surround today's community and speak of faith and vision for the future.



Gathering in the unfinished building

The new building was officially opened and dedicated in a service held on Sunday October 3, 2004. David Wells, the District Superintendent was the guest speaker. The Living Waters family settled into their new home, found community and, most importantly, the presence of the Lord.

Having completed their work at Living Waters, Ken and Eunice resigned in 2005. Their legacy of faith and building will continue to speak into the future generations who follow and find Living Waters to be their home.

CHAPTER 7

A CALL TO SERVE

Linda and I answered the call to pastor Living Waters in March of 2006. I had previously served for 10 ½ years at Christian Life Assembly in Langley as Executive Pastor. We always had a warm spot for Living Waters. Linda and I would drive by the small church before the new building was built and I would say, “Wouldn’t it be nice to pastor a small church like this? Just marry, bury and love on the people.” We would often visit Living Waters during holidays and our sense of connection grew. I remember attending a service just after the new church was built, it was exciting and it seemed sure there was an even larger story yet to be told.



Doug and Linda Smith

It was the summer of 2005 when I heard that Ken and Eunice were resigning as pastors of Living Waters. I was disappointed to hear they were leaving but happy to hear they would be moving to the island to serve in ministry with their son Scott.

As I thought about Living Waters and the Gaglardi's departure I wondered at the future of the church and where the Lord would take it. It was in my wonderings that I felt the unmistakable prompt of the Spirit to pray about serving at Living Waters. Every time I did, my heartbeat would increase, as would my faith for God's intentions at Living Waters. I began to sense the sure call of the Lord. If it happened, this would be a big move for our family of six and we would have to trust the Lord for His provision. Linda, as has been the case throughout our marriage, encouraged me to follow the leading of the Spirit.

I discussed the possibility of a transition with a close ministry friend and then had a difficult conversation with Brent Cantelon, CLA's lead pastor. Brent and I were and are dear friends and it was hard for me to even think about leaving him and a church community I loved so deeply. Brent being Brent said that if I was sensing the call of the Lord then that had to be my first consideration. Soon, with his release and a clear call firmly planted in my own heart I submitted my name to the District for consideration.

The process was much longer than I expected, 7 months in fact. It was such a strange feeling sensing the call of the Lord with such sureness and then submitting to such a practical process. I felt so unqualified and yet I knew I was called. Linda and I both agreed that at the end of the day, despite my increasing angst, we had simply to trust the Lord.

Through those long months my heart for Living Waters increased. I would often go to Fort Langley to walk and to pray. Sometimes, because I didn't want to be presumptuous, I would park across the street at a mall and look at the church and pray for its people and future.



The Living Waters Bell Tower

At one point the Lord gave me a clear vision of the church's future. On August 20th, 2005 I wrote these words in my journal while looking over to Living Waters...

From where I sit, I can just see the church. It sits hidden by some trees – but the bell tower stands above it all. My dream would be that somehow the church of Jesus – like the bell tower - would stand above the rest, above the clutter of the world and that His church would be a loving, embracing community of believers. Believers who take what they know to be true out of the walls of the church and to the places Jesus would have us go.

In my dream I see this church as a place in which the love of Jesus is discovered personally, celebrated corporately and shared freely...as it was to us. I feel like I can see it. The place is packed; new people who have not experienced church (or who are willing to give it another shot) are there. They are joyful, but authentically so. They know, or are learning the path of Jesus is not easy, but it is the only way. Old timers are liberally sprinkled throughout the crowd. They love what they see because they see Jesus all around them.

As much as there is great joy and exuberance, there are also incredibly deep, quiet moments in which the contemplation of the cross has brought the heart to a fresher revelation.

There is a singleness of heart and mind in the house.... a clear expressed sense of 'this is where I belong... where we belong and we know where we are going'.

Our vision is natural to us, because it is the Lord's. No human has fabricated it. Many in the house are leaders. Old pastoral paradigms have been broken, gifts have been recognized and people have been released to do what the Lord has called them to do.

Love for one another is expressed as Jesus would through grace, mercy, forgiveness, patience, understanding, encouragement and courage – there is a sure knowledge that the Father is pleased with his children.

There is enough faith in the place to shake its very foundations. It is faith as Jesus described it. Its discovery in our lives is progressive and amazing. God's patience is clear, as is our determination to push through our weaknesses and into a place of healing and wholeness. I see supernatural events that are a result of our belief and the hand of God at work among us.

When I dream like this my fear takes a back seat. This is so much about God and less of me. I must become less and He more. Fear must be challenged and destroyed. New territory must be claimed.

CHAPTER 8

THE EARLY TEAM

Early in the New Year of 2006 the process of waiting ended and I was invited to become the lead pastor of Living Waters but not before discovering the Lord was providing even more than I imagined or hoped for. Just like Him.

Linda and I have known and loved Darcy and Leanne McAlister for many years. Our friendship found its feet in 1992 when we lived in Terrace and the McAlisters were called to Terrace Pentecostal Assembly. Darcy served as youth pastor and I was on the board. Our friendship blossomed and continued after each of our families independently landed in the Lower Mainland.



Darcy and Leanne McAlister

Leanne and Darcy McAlister had been attending Living Waters for two years before the Gaglardi's resignation and after they left, Leanne was appointed the interim pastor. At the time neither Leanne nor Darcy had thoughts of being on the permanent pastoral team, but during the early fall of 2005 things began to change. They had been considering an offer to pastor a church in Calgary but after praying they found no peace. Leanne often prayer walked through their Walnut Grove neighbourhood. On one crisp fall day she asked God to confirm what she and Darcy were to do. As she walked past an elementary school during recess, one of the kids yelled "Living Waters". "Why, we will never know." they say, but as a result Leanne and Darcy felt confirmation about Living Waters being the place to settle and serve. They met with Dave Wells, the District Superintendent, and let him know they felt called to Living Waters but not to be the lead pastors. Interestingly, neither couple knew what God was saying to the other.

Under the guidance of Superintendent Dave Wells, a unique leadership structure was proposed for Living Waters. Darcy, Leanne, Linda and I were asked to form a pastoral leadership team with me as the lead. Leanne would serve part time while Linda and Darcy served in a volunteer capacity. The lead team was an essential part of developing the initial foundations for what we all believed would be an amazing future for Living Waters. Darcy brought a strong missions perspective and deep wisdom to our table. Leanne helped build a strong environment of worship and later, as an associate pastor, gave incredible leadership to the women's and mentoring networks. She was also an integral part of our speaking team. Linda helped us to develop important administrative structures and our sense of welcome in the lobby. She would later be hired part-time in a pastoral and administrative role. Linda was both my partner in marriage and in ministry and always an excellent and honest sounding board. After a couple of years, when the timing was right, the initial Leadership Team gave way to a new structure that saw the development of an associate team which included Leanne, Luke Knight and myself.



Luke Knight and Doug Smith

When we began in 2006 the church numbered around 60 to 70 people and was served primarily by a core of dedicated volunteers. Jennifer Burmeister and Esanju Bonga helped lead in the children's ministry, Luke Knight, a student at Summit Pacific College, served as intern and Brett Donald, also a student at Summit, was serving as a part time youth pastor.

Luke formally joined the ministry in 2007 and gave leadership to our growing Young Adults Ministry and also served on our Leadership Council. I had known Luke and his mom Joanne while I was pastoring at Christian Life Assembly. He was just a youngster then but both his mom and I saw something in that kid. Luke's early leadership at Living Waters was instrumental in the fruition of the vision the Lord gave us, a church full of Young Adults. In our early years, as more and more people came, we were surprised and thankful to see a congregation that was at least 80% young adults. There was hunger, there was vitality and there was life!

Brett Donald also moved to a permanent position in 2007 as Student Ministries Pastor and was responsible for developing what was called "The Lab"; a place for youth to explore faith and find a relationship with Jesus. We first got to know Brett and his wife Natalie at their wedding, which took place shortly after Linda and I arrived. It was clear from the beginning that they were a powerhouse couple. Brett's powerful teaching, his understanding of youth and his heartfelt desire to see young men and women transformed by the power of God were evident from the beginning.

With strong leadership being provided to our growing youth and young adult networks, we focused on Children's ministry. We knew the Lord's desire was to reach families and it was important to find the right person. I remember the day I saw Dee-Ana Goodman through my office window. She just happened to be getting out of her car in our church parking lot. I had been thinking that Dee-Ana would be a perfect fit for us.

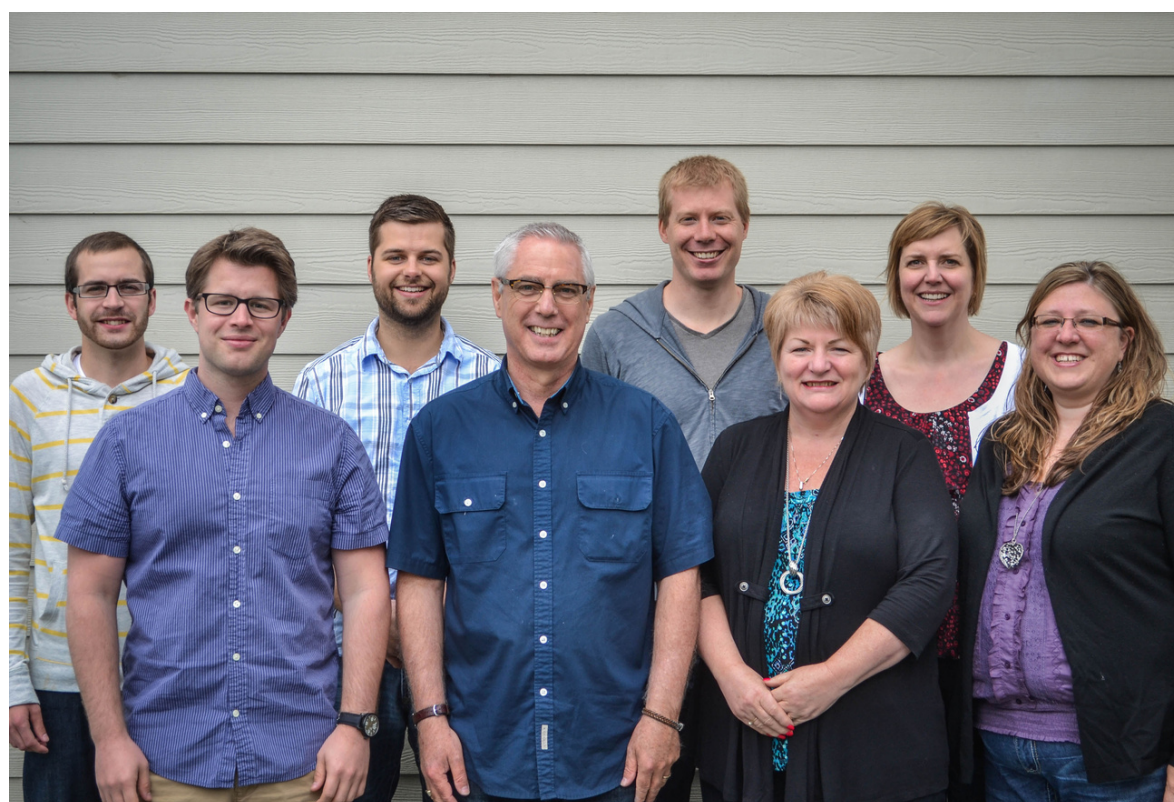


Dee-Ana Goodman

She had a strong background in children's ministry, she was a great communicator, was full of life and she was the kind of person we needed to grow that important part of our church family. I raced from my desk and caught her completely by surprise in the parking lot. We discussed right then and there the potential of her coming to work for us. Dee-Ana was, to say the least, reluctant. Her family was her primary consideration and she didn't want to take on something she couldn't do well. I encouraged her to at least pray. As it turned out, Living Waters was where the Lord wanted her; the only promise she wanted from me was that she wouldn't have to be full time. She's not quite there yet. The rest is good history. Dee-Ana took a children's ministry that was no more than a handful of kids and, with Carol Slusar and the rest of the brilliant team, oversaw the re-development of our full lower floor under the banner of Kid's @ The Fort. Literally many hundreds of children and their families have been impacted by our children's ministry and touched by the Spirit of God.

In the years following the early team, the Lord guided us to amazingly gifted leaders who with the guidance of the Holy Spirit have made a huge impact. Each one a gifted leader: Chris Murphy, Ryan Bedwell, Reuben Kramer, Mike Vaters, Elyse Brouwer, Joanne Knight, Rebeca Monzo, Joel and Brandi Reimer, Nick McAlister, Katrina Bedwell, Kyle Epp, Courtney Bridge, Benjamin McAlister and a number of amazing interns.

I can't say enough about the team that for us was family. It was their passion to follow Christ and their love and commitment to His church that propelled us forward. This was a team that embraced our church values by living them out. They believed in the future we were being called to. Each led by example. From the beginning we adopted a non-hierarchical model that meant no one was more important or influential than the other; we had a common purpose and that was to serve Jesus and His church.



2012 Team Picture

(left to right: Mike Vaters, Luke Knight, Reuben Kramer, Doug Smith, Ryan Bedwell, Linda Smith, Leanne McAlister, Dee-Ana Goodman)

OUR CURRENT TEAM



Ryan Bedwell



Kyle Epp



Harold Sawatzky



Rachel Schock



Lynn Gettel



Dee-Ana Goodman



Carol Slusar



Doug Smith



Luke Knight



Reuben Kramer



Dave Solmes



Ricky Stephen



Rebeca Monzo



Ethan Newman



Mike Vaters



Rob Wilson

CHAPTER 9

WHAT WE VALUE

During my early Fort Langley prayer walks, I began to sense the Lord asking us to pursue a number of specific biblical values. Vision statements can be bold and pithy but their brevity sometimes means their sentiment is lost over time; values on the other hand speak of how we live life today. Led by the Spirit we ultimately found our way to 7 core values.

The first was community, which at its heart describes His church; it all begins with relationship with Jesus and each other. The second was authenticity; this was all about being real with God and with each other and not simply playing at church. Next was worship; the very point of being in relationship with God and recognizing who He is and who we are not. Oddly enough next was the great commission. Not normally considered as a “value” but a commandment, this value would make reaching out in love central in all that we do. Our value of Spiritual Formation came as being critical to our “welcome” in that we value the fact that everyone is on a journey and that not all are at the same place and we respect that. We grow together in Christ. Then came generosity. It seems incongruous to be a follower of Jesus and lack generosity. The hope behind this value was to have those around us see the generosity of Jesus through our actions.

Finally, recognizing and releasing; this value came later as we saw the church growing and the evident need to see the release of the gifts that God distributes to His church. I have always seen this value as one that holds leadership accountable to not only recognize the gifts in the church, but also to ensure they are released. When we do that, we're at our best.

From their inception, our core values have helped us form everyday decisions and overall direction. If something we do doesn't meet a value's intention we know it deserves a sober second look.

CHAPTER 10

GOD GROWS HIS CHURCH

Healthy things grow; they have life, give life, are attractive, are not stationary and are flexible. From its early beginnings in 1940 the Lord's desire was to see His church grow and thrive. Depending on the Lord's leading, every church will experience growth differently. For us, we grew first in faith and then in numbers.

By October of 2006 the church had grown from an average of 60 to 70 people attending on Sundays to an average of at least 150 people, often surpassing 200. Our team was surprised. We knew the Lord would build His church but most of us expected it would take at least two or three years. Instead we found ourselves challenged to keep up and we began to understand the need to be flexible. Our infrastructure had to somehow keep pace. Giving was way up and proper systems had to be in place, policies had to be developed, and volunteers recognized and released. We needed a new constitution, a formal membership and leadership council.

The church board, now called our Leadership Council, has been instrumental in guiding the church to a healthy place. The Leadership Council is a group of women and men who, under today's constitution are members who have been

appointed by council and ratified by the membership at a subsequent annual meeting.

Their role is crucial as they look to care for the church. They serve as a sounding board, a source of deep prayer and reflection, sharing a faith filled concern for the future of the church. Two things were hugely important to us in the development of the first constituted Leadership Council. The first, there was no room for politics or agendas. Too many churches have faced the end of their days due to division and a self-serving nature. And second, our Council (some churches might use the term overseers) was open to both men and women – case closed.

From our start in 2006, and through to the time of writing, the Leadership Councils at Living Waters have been powerfully unified, brilliantly strategic and amazingly supportive. Over the years, faithful, caring, Spirit filled women and men who have sacrificed much for the sake of His church, have served our community. We owe each of them a deep debt of gratitude.

On May 27th of 2007 we launched our first membership classes, which were held over three consecutive Sundays. With a membership in place, in October of the same year, we formally adopted our local church constitution with by-laws. In March of 2008 the church became a self-governing assembly, meaning we were no longer a direct responsibility of the District but were considered to be affiliated and able to stand on our own. It was all quite an undertaking and often felt overwhelming except that we knew this was in the Lord's hands, not ours. He made a way for us and in fact increased our faith for even more.

CHAPTER 11

MAKING ROOM

As a community we had accepted the responsibility of being a “people of invitation” and the Lord was leading more and more people to Living Waters. On January 14th of 2007, for the first time in our church’s history, we launched a second service. The first gathering was held at 9:00am and the second at 11:00. It was a step of faith for us as our single service was not yet full when we launched the second gathering. However, we sensed the Lord was already calling people and our job was to make room for all who would come. By the fall of 2007 close to 280 people were spread between the gatherings and we saw the Lord, by His Spirit, breathing life and hope into our community; they were wonderful days of anticipation.

In September of 2012 we added an evening gathering at 6:30pm, which made for three Sunday gatherings. A year later, on September 8, 2013, we saw our very first Sunday with four gatherings, three in the morning at 8:30, 10:00, 11:30 and one in the evening at 6:30pm and more than 750 people gathering to worship on a Sunday.



Full House in Fort Langley

CHAPTER 12

MULTIPLICATION

In 2010 the Lord had us undertake our very first church plant. Church planting had been on our hearts for some time so when the District asked us to partner in re-launching a church in Burnaby, we were immediately interested. The church was called Boundary Road Assembly and the District wanted to re-launch the church using a church-planting model. We talked, we prayed, we visited and soon found ourselves all in. Boundary Road Assembly had been around since the 1950's and 60 years later the church needed new life, new leadership and a new direction.

Brett Donald was our youth pastor at the time and both he and his wife Natalie had felt an early personal call to church plant. We asked if they would take it on and they agreed wholeheartedly in 2011. Over a period of years, and with our partnership both practically and financially, the church found a new and fresh footing. Under the leadership of Brett and Natalie, and a council of leaders, the church, now called City Lights, has gained health and purpose. City Lights is currently home to around 125 people and Brett and Natalie continue to serve with passion.



Boundary Road Assembly



City Lights Church Building



City Lights Church Today



Brett and Natalie Donald

Our second church plant came in 2015. The church was continuing to grow and with that growth, our heart to plant a second community. Our pointed prayer, discussions and planning began in 2013. We felt the Lord leading us to plant a church that would at least begin by being a campus of the Fort Langley church. We also determined the new campus should be no more than a 15 minute drive from our Fort Langley location so that we could easily share combined leadership roles and volunteer resources.

A number of locations for the new church plant were considered but at the end of the day we felt the Lord drawing us to Willoughby. It was a growing neighbourhood with incredible potential and within that 15-minute radius. In the fall of 2014 we asked Ryan and Katrina Bedwell to lead the new plant; Ryan was serving as an associate pastor and both he and Katrina had a heart to plant a church. After many discussions and considerable prayer, they agreed. Next, we asked for up to 100 people from the existing Fort Langley congregation to consider committing to being a part of the plant's first congregation. Faithfully they came, called, committed and curious to see what the Lord would do.

Early in 2015 we adjusted our evening gathering to a "church planting" gathering. The new community began meeting in Fort Langley at 4:30 in the afternoon and soon started forming teams and infrastructure that would eventually transfer to a new Willoughby location.



Willoughby Setup



Willoughby Church Life



Willoughby Gathering (music room)



Willoughby Gathering (gym)

Ryan describes the process and its outcome in his AGM report in 2016:



Ryan and Katrina Bedwell

“The new campus started gathering at the end of May on Sunday afternoons at Fort Langley. We met throughout the summer to build in strength and develop teams before launching into the new location. This was an exciting time as we typically had between seventy-five to ninety people gathering together those afternoons, to begin building community and worshiping together. It was during the early summer that we were able to secure Yorkson Creek Middle School as our launch location.

It is a beautiful building that suits our community well. The school has large, bright rooms that allow our adult gathering and our children’s ministry to worship and celebrate in an inviting environment. The facility also has room for us to grow, as there is a secondary gymnasium that we can eventually use.

At the end of August we launched in our new location at Yorkson Creek. We invited the community to join us and over the fall season saw many people from Willoughby find connection at Living Waters, beginning to call it home. Through the fall we had between 110 to 120 people gathering on a Sunday morning. One very exciting place at the Willoughby Campus is Willoughby Kids where we often have over 30 children come and join us! What a great sign that we are already reflecting the community demographic of young families.”

From the 100 we asked to move to the Willoughby campus we formed a volunteer leadership team of 20. I can’t say enough about these women and men who put their time, energies and faith into this new work. One of the first couples to volunteer was Laura and Darrel Pahl. I won’t soon forget the day they came into my office and shared their heart for this new plant. Their extensive church experience, their love for Living Waters and their excitement for this new venture were incredibly encouraging. As I write, both are still serving the campus. Darrel has set-up and taken down the portable church (mostly his design) on the majority of Sundays. Laura leads in worship and is a constant support. They are the epitome of servant leaders.

CHAPTER 13

VOLUNTEERS MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

Our value of Recognizing and Releasing says in part, “*Each believer has a God given gift allowing them to help build the church, fulfill its vision and make a difference.*” There is no doubt that the work of volunteers over the last 80 years of our history has been the difference between church vitality and stagnation, of community life or death. It’s because servant hearts are at the core of what was purposed by the Lord for us to do. Over the last 8 decades many hundreds of people have served over many thousands of hours at Living Waters in a passionate effort to serve Jesus, to build His church and expand His Kingdom.



Volunteer Party (2019)

The Sunday school worker who taught in a small basement space in the original church shared the same passion and call to serve as today's children's ministry workers. The bus driver who made his way to Glen Valley to pick up kids for Sunday school in the 50's and the LWC shuttle drivers of today were of different times to be sure, but of common heart and purpose. Their investment of time, faith and vision for what God might accomplish is the very mortar of our foundation and that continues to speak hope and life to our future. It has always very much been a team effort and is well described in Ephesians 4:15-16

Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. 16 He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love. (NLT)



Music Network Volunteers



Cranberry Festival Volunteers



The Gift Volunteers

CHAPTER 14

A TEACHING TEAM

Our core value of Spiritual Formation says in part, *"Our path is one of experiencing God in His fullness, of learning to be Christ-like and then applying what we have learned in love."* The value underlines the importance of experience while underscoring both Biblical learning and its application. Since 1940 Biblical teaching has been central to the path of Living Waters. Over the past 80 years countless messages have been shared from a variety of platforms and from a variety of voices. In our time it was always fun when someone who was new to the church asked me who the lead pastor was. They might have been attending for a few weeks but based on who was preaching they couldn't tell.



Luke Knight Teaching in 2019

That's because in many church models the lead or senior pastor is usually the primary teacher and an associate or guest speaks every once in a while. We wanted to change that up for a couple of reasons; first, we learn best from a variety of informed voices and second, teaching was never my gift. Over the years the Lord has gifted our community with a number of qualified and gifted teachers like Leanne McAlister, Luke Knight, and Brett Donald. Others who have risen up since and been released to speak life to our community like Rikk Watts who was a professor of New Testament theology at Regent College.

With the excellent help of Luke Knight, our teaching calendar took on a deliberate and focused purpose. We developed teaching series and provided topical messages we believed would both strengthen and challenge the community. One of our biggest steps was in the fall of 2013 when we determined to teach through the Gospel of Mark – verse by verse. The series, which was intermingled from time to time with topical or seasonal messages, completed on November 1st of 2015, almost two years later. It was wonderful and no stone or verse was left unturned.

Psalm 119:105 - *Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path.*

CHAPTER 15

A PLACE OF WORSHIP

Our value of worship says in part, “*we are a people who recognize God for who He is and because of that we are drawn naturally to a place of worship.*” When our community gathered to corporately worship it almost always seemed we would find ourselves on the same page. Whether standing, sitting, kneeling and even sparingly dancing, our expressions of adoration were mustered from hearts that simply recognized God as absolutely worthy.

Similar to our speaking team, we developed a number of worship teams, so style and form was often different, a great representation of the church.



One of Fort Langley's Worship Teams

I especially loved watching members of the youth band being encouraged to join an adult team, being welcomed and mentored. More than once a caring worship leader had the sound person turn down the volume of a young person's instrument until they became more confident and proficient musicians.

Admittedly, when we first started at Living Waters, some expressed their relief that we would now be able to get back to the hymns. While I appreciated and continue to appreciate hymns, I was committed to two thoughts, the first, a fresh, vibrant and attractive form of worship and secondly, a firm resolve not to engage in what has less lovingly been labeled in other settings as “worship wars”. Under the capable and loving leadership of many amazing worship directors like Leanne McAlister, Luke Knight, Paula Lindsay, Joel Reimer and Nick McAlister, shots were never fired.



Willoughby Worship

CHAPTER 16

GLOBAL WORK

“We are a people who understand the church is not limited by its building or by a street address. The church is us and we are called to reach beyond our walls and impact the lives of those who are far from God who live there. We see the sphere of our influence ranges from our backyard to the world.”

Our Great Commission value makes clear our mission is to reach others, whether we share a fence as neighbours or they live in the crowded neighbourhoods of Chennai, India. In the case of our global reach, we made an early commitment first under Darcy McAlister’s care and later Ryan Bedwell’s leadership, to growing our Global Work initiatives.



Dominican Republic Global Work Team

Back in 2005 Living Waters was supporting a single missionary couple – David and Henny Thormoset who served with Wycliffe Translators and had an early relationship with Living Waters. We loved them and their work and we wanted to reach even farther. A strategy to develop expanded global relationships began to unfold, as did our commitment to provide not only ongoing financial support but also connection and friendship. As an example, community member Heather Green produced beautiful handmade cards that were sent around the world wishing missionary kids a happy birthday or families, Merry Christmas. Messages of encouragement and practical helps were sent along including practical gifts from our Kids @ The Fort. On many of their visits to Living Waters, Global Workers singled out our community for its personal care, concern and generosity.

Aaron and Rebecca Roorda, who now serve as pastors in Prince Rupert were Global Workers in South East Asia for 10 years and supported throughout by Living Waters. Aaron and Rebecca say the support helped them to thrive.



Roorda Family

“Living Waters Church is all about being a people that work together for God’s glory. From our first Sunday as college students checking out the church to our 10 plus year relationship as being sent Global Workers from LWC, we can testify to the power of togetherness. Global work was something we always knew was in our future and finances were one of the determining factors in getting overseas. As our support raising efforts began, we were honoured to have the Living Waters community quickly jump on board to support our ministry. What we didn’t realize then when they made the decision to support us was that their generosity went way past finances. They would offer authentic relationship that would help keep us on the field for 10 years. This came in the way of encouraging emails, intentional prayers for our needs and providing of resources (gift cards, houses, cars, our favourite treats) while we were on home assignment in Canada. As we reflect on our time overseas we had a constant knowledge that if there was ever anything we felt we couldn’t face there was a church to fall back on for support. We knew this

because they constantly instilled in us that we were in this together. Living Waters generously gave and that helped bring not only financial stability but also the sense of togetherness that helped us to thrive.”

Aaron and Rebecca Roorda

Over the years we have supported up to a dozen Global Workers at a time. These are individuals and couples literally spread around the globe: India, East Asia, Russia, Thailand, Kenya, the Dominican Republic, Eastern Europe and some here on the Canadian home front. We were particularly happy that we were able to support a number of Global Workers who were sent out from Living Waters; they included Joel and Brandi Reimer in India, Matt and Amber Price and Zach and Megan Wylie in Thailand, Aaron and Rebecca Roorda in South East Asia, Laura and Kelvin Chan in Thailand and ultimately, Darcy and Leanne McAlister, who had the responsibility through our national office of caring for global workers around the world.

Over the period between 2007 and 2020 Living Waters has given approximately \$1,730,000.00 in Global Work support. Untold numbers have been influenced and lives transformed through the generous giving of this community. We have learned that the hallmark of a healthy thriving church is found in its generous response to the Great Commission.

CHAPTER 17

INVESTING IN KINGDOM GROWTH

Bill Rowell and Chris Howson served as treasurers between 2006 and 2010 respectively. I was so thankful for them and the hours they spent pouring over the books of a growing church. David Knight has been our treasurer since taking over from Chris in 2010. I never envied him the job as there is a great responsibility attached to managing and caring for a church's resources. He loves it. David witnessed some pretty amazing things and more than once during our Leadership Council meetings he would pause and say (astonished each time), "We just can't out give God."

As David puts it, preparing the church budget in the early fall was a little daunting because the old budget year was not yet complete and we had to estimate the final 3 months of offerings which included end of the year giving.

"How could we plan for the following year with all this uncertainty? As it turned out, God already knew what was needed and where growth would come. We would plan, worry and plan again and God would supply and provide over and above all of those plans, enabling the church to be even more generous. We always had more than enough. It didn't seem to matter what we planned to give away, there was always more."

David Knight

Thanks to good stewardship and the generosity of Ken and Eunice Gaglardi, who did not draw a salary from the church, we began in 2006 with the only debt being a remaining mortgage of \$47,000.00 on the new church building. We were delighted in 2010 to have Ken and Eunice Gaglardi join us in the burning of the mortgage as payment was made in full.



Mortgage Burning

One of the first major capital expenditures we made was in 2007 when we purchased 220 new chairs for the auditorium. It was a necessary purchase practically, but more importantly it was a faith step toward the vision the Lord had given us of a full house. We believed every new chair would be needed and they were.

Similarly, the gravel parking lot would soon be too small to handle the increasing number of cars and so it was doubled in size. It has since grown by another third. Later, we began an extensive project to renovate our lower floor to a wonderful child friendly environment. We also updated the lobby and the rest of the church with new paint and signage. They were exciting days with each project aimed to help us be a place of welcome, a home for all who would come.



Lower Floor Children's Area

In 2014 we undertook a major renovation of the auditorium and developed a new look in keeping with our Fort Langley community. New carpeting throughout the building, side paneling, a revamped platform and wings, lighting and sound made for an entirely new and inviting environment.



Auditorium Renovation



In 2015 we had outgrown our nursery and the answer was to re-purpose the “Upper Room” to allow for an expanded nursery space that could be easily transitioned to a meeting space after each Sunday. The “Upper Room” was always a favourite space for me. The open concept and large windows made it ideal for a myriad of small gatherings ranging from men’s breakfasts, marriage courses, Life Group leader summits, and youth and young adult gatherings. The former nursery was then re-purposed into a much-needed smaller meeting place, perfect for staff meetings, council meetings, one on one’s and as our team grew, for temporary office space.



Men's Breakfast in the renovated Upper Room

CHAPTER 18

AS HE IS GENEROUS

The heart of a church is expressed through its generosity and our generosity begins with Jesus. Our value of generosity says it right off the top. “*As Jesus was generous, so too do we wish to be a generous people*”. As a practical reflection of that value since 2007 we have been setting aside 5% of our general budget to give away to groups or organizations. When I say give away, our criteria for supporting a group was simple. They had to be a registered Canadian charity, they had to be doing work that Jesus would love and they didn’t need to be a Christian organization. Not long after we instituted the fund, a Social Justice team was created who, among other important work, had the responsibility of looking for places and people we might help along the way. They would then make recommendations to our Council. The Generosity Fund has helped us to support others like the Food Bank, the Gateway of Hope, Ishtar Transition House, Wagner Hills, the Deborah House (for trafficked women) and the Langley Christmas Bureau. Once we even purchased a \$10,000.00 hospital bed to meet a need at Langley Memorial. Our Generosity Fund has also given to emergency humanitarian responses in Iraq, Syria, Nepal and India. Since 2007 we have been able to give away approximately \$960,000.00.

As Jesus was generous so too do we want to be a generous people.

CHAPTER 19

TRANSITION

“Lord, would you have us here another year?” It was a question I made a point of asking each year; usually in the summer and before our fall launch. Every year I sensed not only a green light to move forward but also a sense of vision and the empowerment of Spirit to lead another year. The fall of 2016 was the exception. As I prayed there was no green light nor did I seem to have any vision for the upcoming year. It was, to say the least, disconcerting and would have been even more difficult to accept had it not been for a strong sense of Lord’s love and encouragement. It seemed it was time to do what I always said I would do and that was step-aside when it was time, and make room for someone else to step in. It was time for fresh vision for a fresh future.

May 28th, 2017 was our final Sunday as leaders at Living Waters. We were wonderfully cared for and encouraged during that season of transition and that final Sunday seemed to come too quickly. While everything about saying goodbye seemed right, it was still a surreal feeling to drive away after 11 years of pouring in and being poured into by our church family. We shared so many things; life, hope, victory, challenge, tears and laughter. The only thing that made the drive home easier was the sure sense the Lord had someone in mind to take on the lead role. A good transition process was in place, prayers were being lifted and I felt sure the Lord was already speaking. As it turns out He was.

CHAPTER 20

SURPRISING CONVERSATIONS

BY DAVE SOLMES

After years of attending Living Waters Church it was very sad to process, with my church and friends, the transition of Doug and Linda Smith as lead pastors of Living Waters Church. I was asked to pray a prayer of thanksgiving and blessing over them during one of the services on their final Sunday and I recall praying for the future of the church during that moment, not ever imagining I was praying for our present team and myself.

In 2008, when my family and I moved from Victoria, we were so happy to make Living Waters Church our home church. Our choice to land at LWC was two-fold. Someone personally invited us and we discovered the values of the church.



Dave and Julie Solmes

From day one it has been my hope that the values of this community would be expressed through my life. Julie and I and our three children quickly benefited from kids and youth ministries. Within months of joining the church in 2008, Julie and I found ourselves in a Life Group full of families with kids our age. Because of my role at the PAOC district office, my weekend travel often kept me from gathering on Sunday. What I did commit to was regularly attending Tuesday morning early prayer in the Fort Langley auditorium. Week after week my love and appreciation for this church grew. I often did not know the names of the people I was praying for but when you find yourself week after week lifting the needs of a congregation, your heart begins to carry the concerns of the Lord for a place and people. I had no idea that one day I would join such a great team and congregation.

Part way through the year of Doug's lead pastor transition in 2017, and after a series of surprising conversations, Julie and I found ourselves in a process with the discernment committee and council about this lead pastor vacancy. To be honest my initial thoughts of following the Smith's was quite daunting. Secondly, to transition in my thoughts as a church member to thinking hopefully, strategically, and as a visionary about a place and people you love and respect, were challenging and continue to be a matter of careful discipline, prayer, fasting, and collaboration.

What a good day it was to be affirmed by the membership of Living Waters church on Sunday, October 15, 2017. With excitement I joined the team in January of 2018. In some ways not too much has changed in the last two and a half years. I was thankful to join a healthy team and congregation with lots going on. The big question in any leadership position is always appreciating "What is God blessing?" and "What does God have on His mind and in His heart for a congregation and community?" As I arrived on the ministry team it was very obvious that God had blessed and still wanted to bless this community with His presence and through extending his reach and love through our church.

My hope will always be to build on the foundation that has been laid so carefully as referenced in Ken Gaglardi's and Doug Smith's writings. The hope of our team continues to be going deeper in our service and relationships, not always wider. Our hope is to lead vision and build teams within various areas of ministry and networks.

LWC is full of capable people who live with large hearts and very responsible gospel-centered lives. I am confident as we make room

for leaders and recognize and release these leaders, our church ministry will become more effective and influential across the Fraser Valley and around the world. Our annual Volunteer Appreciation Day (2019) was a great reminder of that as well over 300 adults were recognized and released to ministry. Another 2019 church highlight was welcoming Doug (and Linda) Smith back on to our pastoral team in a volunteer role. What a joy to work with my friend, and a couple I admire so much.

Living Waters has always grown by making more room. These past two and half years have confirmed in my heart that churches are at their best when they are multiplying. God has certainly blessed the steps of faith that Living Waters has taken to multiply. Living Waters Church is ONE church with multiple locations. With many locations it is easy to see the potential of community involvement and transformation. For example, over the years the Willoughby community has been made richer because of many outreach events (block parties, gym nights, toy drives, and day camps, to name a few). Our Fort Langley community is richer because of serving in The Gift (Live nativity and Christmas market that served over 600 in 2019), men's and women's prison ministry, Fort Langley Cranberry Festival, and LWC arts camp for kids. How amazing to see the involvement of so many offering Helping Hands at Christmas alongside so many community organizations year after year. During the 2019 Christmas season 400 Helping Hands were offered.



Arts Camp Leaders



Helping Hands Volunteers

I imagine the days ahead when Langley, Langley Township, and cities around will be increasingly influenced positively by the families and congregation of Living Waters Church. I imagine a day when Living Waters will have many locations and campuses and because of this, will literally see communities transformed because of the gospel and good Christian work. As LWC celebrates 80 years, how important it is for our congregation to make a renewed commitment to being a good and godly neighbour.

Living Waters has always grown by being a people of welcome. I am aware more than ever that you can't talk about or live out the gospel without two very important convictions being in place. #1. Social concern: These past few years there have been many current events and tragedies that highlight racism, sexism and all manner and forms of inequality in our world. #2. An appreciation for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ: Jesus Christ is returning for a people that have faith. Jesus posed the question in Luke 18:8, "*But when the Son of Man returns, how many will he find on the earth who have faith?*". During this anniversary year my hope is that an appreciation for the gospel of Jesus Christ would inspire and motivate each of us to live with faith in God, as we carry appropriate social concern and hope because of the nearness of Jesus Christ's return. The greatest gift that the Living Waters community can offer in the days ahead is the gift of faith. Faith that says, God loves all people, God can help, God has plans and purposes that are very exciting and need to be discovered.



You Are Welcome

We will be at our best when we are speaking, praying, and serving with faith while we are:

- Welcoming the newcomer to Canada, when we opened our doors and our hearts sponsoring a young adult brother and sister from Syria by way of Jordan in June of 2018.

- Fundraising during Gateway of Hope's Coldest Night of the Year (February, 2019 - 80 LW participants).
- Completing the Fort Langley parking lot project increasing Fort Langley parking to 96 spaces (2019).
- Serving and singing with 1,127 people during our 2019 Christmas Eve services.
- Installing water filtration systems in Honduras (2019).
- Helping fund the planting of 100 acres of Beans in Uganda (2020).
- Praying on Pentecost Sunday during "Near" and sensing the work of the Holy Spirit being poured out and the healing of the sick.
- Beginning a Grow Series (Spring 2020) where our community is discussing current issues and Faith in the Margins.
- Hiring a full time Media Production Director to improve our service online and to be more active on all our church social media platforms. (September, 2020).
- Celebrating the faithfulness of God and his people over the past 80 years (October, 2020).

Living Waters has always grown in reach and relationship because of **generosity**. I continue to be so thankful for the large-hearted generous people of our congregation who are living gospel-centered lives and are giving to local and global work.

COVID -19 - September 2020: We are currently celebrating Living Waters 80th year during a COVID-19 global pandemic. We are told; as of the beginning of October of 2020, over one-million people have died from this coronavirus worldwide. As I write this, I am very aware that our congregation has not met for regular Sunday services for over 26 Sundays. Imagine! The Langley Township is not allowing outside rentals in any schools including Yorkson Creek Middle School where our Willoughby families have been meeting for 5 years. Also, because our BC government has imposed a group limitation of 50 people or less on churches and business, we are unable to meet as we had been on Sundays in our Fort Langley auditorium. Our team, volunteers, and congregation has had to be so flexible and creative this past year. For the past 6 months **Church@Home and Kids@Home** has been one of our main gathering points for our community as we meet online. Yet, how exciting it has been to see people at our drive-through events honouring our Mothers, Fathers, and volunteers, and then again during our Canada Day drive-through food drive where we collected truckloads of food in Fort Langley and Willoughby for the Langley Food bank. What a great way to spend a Canada Day (2020).

While there does not seem to be an immediate end in sight for this global pandemic, I am so appreciative of how our congregation is embracing this chapter in our church's history. Yes, when we gather for Evensong (less than 50 people) for worship, prayer and Bible reading, we are wearing masks for Covid-19 health and safety reasons. Yet, even with masks **we sense God's presence** as we sing, read, and pray to a God who has the whole world in His hand.

Yes, a lot has changed in 2020, but God has plans to strengthen and enlarge His church. This includes Living Waters Church. I am confident that Living Waters Church is a **blessed church and that there is a unique call and destiny for us**. What a wonderful time to be a part of Living Waters Church. Really good days are ahead!



Evensong Gathering

CHAPTER 21

MINISTRY REFLECTIONS



Luke Knight

Being a part of Living Waters Church has taught me how to be a Christian. A church is not a supermarket but a community garden, and having plunged my hands into the dirt along with others I find my life filled with fruit. I learned how to pray in this church. I learned how to forgive and be forgiven in this church. I learned the meaning and importance of humility in this church and that service shows us what God's like. I learned how to trust God in this church in ways I didn't think I'd ever have to. I learned how to be a pastor in this church - or at least how to give it my best shot! I learned how to risk and fail and find grace and try again in this church. I learned how to be myself in this church and that God made me to be me and you to be you. I learned how to give a good sermon in this church, and how to give a bad sermon in this church! I met my pure gift of a wife over soup and prayer in this church. We dedicated our daughter in this church. I've got a lot more to learn and enjoy in this church.

Sometimes we think we have more to offer God than God has to offer us. It is through the life of Living Waters Church I have learned that is never the case. Jesus really did mean what he said: *I have come that you may have life and life to the fullest* (John 10:10). Most often that life is given us through the body of Christ, enlivened by the Holy Spirit. Through Living Waters Church God has filled my life with his love, truth and generosity. I don't know where I'd be without this church – I really don't.

WELCOME

*Our door swings unlocked for the weary
knocked by withered knuckles, drawn together
in nets just below the surface.*

*We didn't lay them but pull them
just as we didn't raise the steeples but sit
under their bells whose ropes now callous
our hands.*

*We are labourers hired late in the day
enjoying clemency's full wage, spreading
fishy rumours, ringing forgotten carillons,
oiling rusty hinges.*



Dee-Ana Goodman

When Living Waters Church (LWC) first opened their doors 80 years ago, it all began with sharing Jesus with children. Today, years later, children remain an integral part of the congregation. As a community, we truly believe that every child is important and worth the time it takes to make a difference in their life and faith journey. I believe, by way of this commitment, that the church has been blessed.

Over the past 14 years, the church has experienced many twists and turns. With just 15 children in attendance in 2006, we are now thankful that in

2020, the community regularly ministers to over 200 children! LWC has celebrated many events with the community, from fond memories of SportsZone, Fall Kick-offs, and Christmas productions, to more recent, cherished events such as “The Gift” and Arts Camp.

As a church family, we believe in authentically living out our values. Our children are no exception. They have continually shown great care for the community, both locally and globally, with projects such as their “famous” lemonade stands for global work, as well as their Art Auctions to raise money for local charities.

It is truly an incredible privilege for me to be a part of witnessing these different generations of LWC leaders being raised up. As we trust God with the future, and the next part of our story, let us continue to inspire children to love God, love others, and love life so that they may go and share about Jesus’ unconditional love with everyone that they meet.



Reuben Kramer

I love how Living Waters Church has always been intentional in finding ways to be involved in the Fort Langley community. We are located in a very special village that consists of residents who love their neighbourhood, friendly small business owners and dedicated volunteers who help create a warm place to live in. Over the last 10 years, I have been honoured to be a part of several different opportunities where our church has had to work shoulder-to-shoulder with our neighbours in the Fort. This includes creating a space for families to visit during the annual Cranberry Festival, offering volunteers and equipment for the Christmas Tree Lighting, handing out warm drinks at the Remembrance Day ceremony, and donating picnic tables and umbrellas for the popular Gasoline Alley. I am so grateful to God for opening up these opportunities for our church to serve. It is such a blessing to hear the locals speak highly of Living Waters Church because of the presence we have had in the community!



Leanne McAlister

I served as an Associate pastor at Living Waters for almost ten years. Living Waters is where I learned to lead. Under the leadership of Doug Smith, LW was a safe place to try things and failure was seen as just an opportunity to add to the learning. About halfway through my time on staff I developed a burden for the women in our community. We were surrounded by amazingly gifted women, but they were hesitant to move forward in their gifts and God's call on their life. The issues they faced were a lack of confidence and confusion about their role as women. I looked around for leadership curriculum to use and found nothing that was satisfactory. I remember one of the women in the church saying, "Well, I guess you will just have to write it yourself."

Julie Simeon and I began to gather women in my home and we just taught them what we thought was important for them to grasp in order to lead well. The major theme was their freedom to lead as women. We tried all kinds of things. Some things worked...and others didn't, but it was OK. We saw women blossom. Some went back to school, others started new ministry initiatives, while others stepped out in faith to what they had always known they were to do. It was exciting!

What emerged was what we now call the ZOE IDENTITY course. This little course has now gone literally around the world and is used by leaders to disciple women in their communities. Living Waters is still home to the IDENTITY course, serving as its incubator. My husband Darcy is currently working with Dave Solmes to develop the IDENTITY course: Men's Edition. LW men were being left behind and Darcy and Dave needed to catch them up! I am thankful for the support of Living Waters as we continue to develop this resource for the larger global church.



Mike Vaters

I remember a time in 2013, caring for a dying parent of a teenager in our community. The family didn't go to our church and it seemed unlikely they would ever attend a church. After a terminal cancer diagnosis of his dad, this teenager took it upon himself to invite me into their home to meet with his father. I didn't know what to expect, but now know that their dad expected me to come dressed up in a suit, Bible in hand, ready to force him to repent. In my sandals and jeans, I sat on their couch for 2 hours that day, sharing the experience of losing my dad, and wrestling together with the question "Why would God let this happen?" Three months later I was able to baptize the dad in the Fraser River. One month after that, we opened our partially renovated auditorium to host his funeral with a packed house full of people who wouldn't normally find themselves in a church. I read Psalm 23, "The Lord is my Shepherd..." and shared about this dad's love and embrace of Jesus in his last days.

List of Lead Pastors

Rev. Phil and Jennie Gaglardi	(1939 – 1943)
Rev. Bill and Laurene Drury	(1943 to 1949)
Rev. Bert Sutton	(1949)
Rev. Hugo Johnson	
Rev. Roy and Gerda Davis	(1953)
Rev. Ron and Betty Preston	
Rev. Roy and Lois Webb	
Dan and Rose Anonby	(1960-1962)
Rev. Larry and Karen Keller	(1963-1967)
Rev. Art and Margaret Zaporozan	(1968-1973)
David Murdoch	(1973-1974)
John Welch	(1974)
Dr. Roger and Laurel Stronstad	(1974 - 1975)
Rev. Orst Zilinsky	(1975 – 1978)
Rev. James and Nives Cornock	(1978 - 1986)
Rev. Jerry Ross	(1987 – 1993)
Peter Meister and Ralph Wyatt (lay leaders)	(1993 - 1997)
Dr. Ken and Eunice Gaglardi	(1998 - 2005)
Rev. Doug and Linda Smith	(2006 – 2017)
Rev. Dave and Julie Solmes	(2018 – present)

Sources:

Ken Gaglardi – “The Miracles of Living Waters” and portions of Jennie Gaglardi’s writing. Book can be downloaded at lwchurch.ca/miracles
The Pentecostal Testimony Magazine
McLean’s Magazine – October 24th, 1959 edition
The Flying Gaglardis of CLA – Ed Hird’s blog
The District office and Living Waters files
Christian Life Assembly Anniversary book

**Images courtesy of Christian Life Assembly*

