

“Our aim is Love that issues from a pure heart, a good conscience and a sincere faith”
1 Timothy 1:5

Richard’s Top Five Leadership Strengths according to Clifton Strengths Test.

- **Contextual** - Looks to history to understand the present context.
- **Strategic** - Has a natural ability to weigh alternative paths and determine the best one.
- **Learner** - Has a great desire to learn and continuously improve.
- **Developer** - Enjoys recognizing and cultivating the potential in others.

Biography I was born in Calgary, raised in a rural agricultural environment and have five decades of extensive life experience including a good formal education. My core values developed from a deep faith in Jesus Christ that was cultivated in my childhood and youth. Intentionally following his way became important to me as a 30 year old. I now have a decade of teaching and pastoral ministry in the PCC but practiced engineering for 15 years and will celebrate 30 years of marriage with Janet in December. Our ten year old son is Julian. We have lived on the west side of Vancouver (UBC Campus) for 14 years and our family enjoys an annual camping vacation on Hornby Island, BC.

Experience Founder and Director - Around the Well – March 2019 - Present

Richard created a ministry to experiment in discerning God’s call to engage the community outside the walls of existing churches in the area. Our focus is on the 12,000 people who live on UBC campus: mostly long term residents, especially non Christians. The vision is to obey Jesus command to Love your neighbour. Our mission statement is “Building Community through welcoming and mutually transforming relationships.” The group first met in March 2019 and continues with monthly meetings. Lately we have been meeting in St Andrew’s Hall.

Minister Knox Presbyterian, New Westminster BC – Sept. 2010- Dec. 2018

Richard led this congregation through both joyful and challenging times. During this period, Knox gained 37 new members and celebrated a dozen baptisms. Highlights for Richard include the creation of Children’s ministries - a youth group, Christian Urban Camp, a junior choir, and original Christmas play; the coffee and

conversation group; pastoral ministry at Dunwood Place and Buchanan Lodge; and the 125th anniversary celebration.

Chair University Neighbourhoods Association Board – Nov. 2019 to present

Richard ran for this elected position in an effort to connect with the UNA community. His skills in Presbyterian polity have helped him lead the eight person Board which is responsible for a municipal like community of almost 12,000 residents. Stakeholders include residents, UBC itself, the province, the Alma Matter Society, and the Musqueam people.

Engineer Associated Engineering Alberta Ltd. – September 1990 to July 2006

Richard worked with and led multidiscipline engineering teams developing municipal infrastructure as a design engineer, project manager, and water / wastewater treatment specialist.

Education Regent College / Vancouver School of Theology – Master of Divinity, 2010

University of Alberta – Master of Engineering, Civil Environmental, 1997

McGill University - Bachelor of Engineering, Chemical, 1989.

**Rev. Richard Watson's Response to Questions
asked by the Kerrisdale Search Committee**

1) How do you engage with families and kids?

This one is a strength for me. I think having a ten year old has really helped. I enjoy engaging with children and youth on many levels. Here are a couple examples:

- a. Sunday worship time - Children's story - this is a time when I really enjoy telling biblical stories to the children. At Knox we used a curriculum (Holy Moly and Connections - both Spark House publications) that thematically engaged the children with the broad biblical story. I wanted to give them at least three encounters with the same story or biblical concept from three perspectives: At story time I would usually tell the story in dramatic form and include a connection to their lives along the way. They would go to their classes and watch a video on the same story but from a different angle, and then they would get some time to engage the story at their level - drawing or making up their own craft or playing a related game,

sometimes they would read the actual scripture during one of those three teaching moments so they would get a forth immersion. Often I liked setting up the preaching around the same scripture or topic and that would give both children and parents an opportunity to engage after the service or on the journey back to their homes.

b. Summer camp - I have led Family camp weekend at Camp Douglas and had a lot of fun, I've also led congregational retreats to Camp Douglas where I engage in storytelling around the campfire and with fun games. I'm a regular chaplain for one of the formal Camp Douglas Summer camps and have had good feedback from campers and staff alike. The staff are often teenagers or young adults and I enjoy that immensely.

c. Around the well events are another place where children and families naturally come together: our events average about 12 children and 30 adults so it is a natural place to engage with both.

2) How will you support us in collaborating with VTPC We are particularly interested in the identified priorities in our partnership with them related to reviving an English-speaking contemporary service, joint youth work and VBS, an English-speaking version of their Golden Age Academy, and working together on the new Mandarin-speaking services to start on Jan 12, co-sponsored by VTPC and Chinese Presbyterian Church.

This partnership as a priority is already a passion of mine. As discussed earlier Larry Yen is actively a part of Around the Well and sends the VTPC Seeds youth group to our events. I enjoy working with their youth and have engaged with them in their classrooms as well as out at UBC (The Beauty Museum Visit). I also share the enthusiasm of creating a new worshipping community that will engage the English speaking second and third generations from VTPC. This work has only just begun - there will be a need to make a plan that engages the core group as well as a broader audience from within the Kerrisdale community. Teamwork will be essential and multiple levels of participation from the existing congregations will enhance the opportunity to build relationships, share talents and grow the worshipping community. The Mandarin Worship service is another area that I fully support. In fact I have supported their application, let my name stand as a reference and supporter for information package that went to Presbytery and the National Church in November 2019.

3) As the new minister at Kerrisdale Church, what are your top three priorities for KPC?

My framework for these priorities comes out of David Fitch's book on Faithful Presence - becoming present to the world in and through a people in a way that invites the world to join with us. The three circles of

- a. **Discipling the worshipping core at Kerrisdale with encouragement towards The Way of Christ** - This includes growth in their own personal disciplines as well as the disciplines of the communal church itself based on the teachings of Christ and the Apostles (the whole of God's word - the bible is the main reference point). I naturally focus on families and children but other demographics like singles, youth and seniors are a very important aspect of this focus too. The discipling will primarily grow out of the existing worship service.
- b. **Teaching and encouraging the people of Kerrisdale to grow in their ability to practice their faith out in the world both as individuals and as a community.** Around the well at UBC is one way to do this. I hope to lead by example and also walk with people as they explore new ways of engagement outside the physical boundaries of the church and into the surrounding community. Encouraging involvement in outside groups is another way to learn and grow in the outside world.
- c. **Pastoral care and relationship building within the existing congregation.** Daily conversations with dropins, visiting people and active engagement through activities that help people continue on their journey: Weddings and memorial services are part of this, as are small group gatherings of various sorts intentionally designed to create space for healing, discernment and spiritual growth.

4) What has growth been in your previous congregation over the last 5 years? We are curious about how you understand 'growth' in the mission and ministries of a congregation and how you see that happening at Kerrisdale.

a. I understand "growth" to mean different things and come from multiple perspectives. At Knox there was growth of the community culture and growth in individuals - both resulted in a shift in awareness of self in relation to neighbour and community that emerged in different ways: i. The Session grew and changed - there was a shift in people (that sometimes helps in changing culture but it doesn't have to.) The way people were able to talk about things that were important to them and the way people became comfortable in accepting different perspectives. ii. Small groups developed and grew into community - at Knox there was a weekly gathering called coffee and conversation. This group began on the initiative of two people: it took encouragement to help them start and consistent discerning presence to both guide them in their own growth as leaders. The group began with about half a dozen people but grew into almost two dozen at times. This was numerical growth but the real growth occurred in the way people interacted with each other and grew in relationship to each other. The growth of the children and family ministry had similar progression -

from a few people with ideas to activities - like a children's choir, a Christmas drama production, Christian urban camp, even the starting of a youth group. Again small numerical increases happened (and it was wonderful to see outside people join in and get more involved) but the spiritual growth in individuals and leaders was remarkable. iii. The congregation itself grew and changed: There actually were 37 new members recorded on the role at Knox over the eight year period that I was there, and the face of Knox and its culture changed as a result but the number of people attending the service did not change significantly. I left with a sense that the leadership had grown enough to be able to continue along a path of growth that would eventually result in more connections with the adjacent community and increasing numbers of people. The spiritual growth in the people who attended was very visible and exciting to see.

Supplementary Notes from Richard on his vision and gifts

NEITHER IS NEW WINE PUT INTO OLD WINESKINS; OTHERWISE, THE SKINS BURST, AND THE WINE IS SPILLED, AND THE SKINS ARE DESTROYED; BUT NEW WINE IS PUT INTO FRESH WINESKINS, AND SO BOTH ARE PRESERVED." *Matthew 9:17*

PARTICIPATORY VISION My desire is to be part of a growing and dynamic group of Christians that longs to engage with the surrounding community and journey with them. I take God's promises and commands seriously and believe we are called to being a blessing to the world in which we live and make disciples of the nations. I am onboard with KPC's missional desire to continue the reconciling ministry of Jesus Christ through sharing the good news that God is love, through worship, fellowship, learning, and outreach. In this light I am committed to discerning God's call with you and the congregation of KPC.

The purpose of this supplemental text is to give you a bit more information about my particular passions and gifts in relation to the discernment process. First off, the metaphor of the wineskin is important to my understanding of the growing and ever changing Christian community. With new wine, fresh wineskins are absolutely required. I see KPC's existing worshipping community as a beautiful old wineskin that provides a container for some really high quality wine, I also see Around the Well as a developing new wineskin. Both old and new require care and attention and I believe this is especially important to this age. Jesus' words of wisdom must have been important to the early church too because they are repeated in three of the four gospels. I am particularly fond of Matthew's emphasis on preserving both old and new as they relate to the challenges that congregations in the Presbyterian Church in Canada face. Both old wine and new is worth special care and attention, as are the wineskins.

Second, core leadership and team ministry is also important in cultivating a positive environment for the faith community to grow and flourish. In the gospels Jesus paid special attention to the future leaders, he also taught in the group setting and sent his disciples out in groups. In this light I am convinced that a core group of committed leadership that works together towards a common vision is required. This group includes the elders on session but partnerships with the people outside the presently defined circles of leadership and people from existing groups like VTPC are very important

too. This core leadership team provides a close circle of fellowship that Christ equips and sends into the local context. Finally, the leadership method of your pastor is important. My primary method is relational: Getting to know people and encouraging them to grow. To me this means that Church life involves being active in the community, taking time to get to know people, leading by example, and developing intentional relationships that open the door for following Christ's way together. I hope to cultivate a love for Christ and desire to care for the community around us too.

WORSHIP AND PREACHING Worship services are central to God's people. Christ gathers us to feed on his word and be renewed. The worship hour is a special place to confess our needs and/or failures, and begin or continue to be healed. It is also the place where the Spirit renews and equips us to go back out to into the world. Although there are many other important activities in the church the worship service is the primary place for the filling and forming of Christ's body. To me this is consistent with the vision of KPC who seek a minister who appreciates the formative power of worship to deepen our relationship with the triune God. I'm full on board with that! Another way of putting this is that the existing worship service is an intimate circle of people who gather on familiar ground with familiar language. It is worth noting that many in the outside world are not able to relate to the existing service and so alternate forms of worship might be helpful in gathering feeding and equipping these people. In light of the wineskin metaphor, care and attention is required to ensure time and space for both old and new wine. I believe God is calling us to open and provide space for people who might be curious about Christ but do not want to engage in traditional worship styles. Around the Well is one form of experimentation to reach out to these type of people. I hope that Kerrisdale is interested in working on developing these new wineskins like Around the Well with me. With KPC's support Around the Well could become a ministry that mutually benefits both church and community.

FELLOWSHIP AND PASTORAL CARE My love for God's people is strongly expressed in pastoral care situations. I see many of the existing groups at KPC as an opportunity for providing pastoral care through fellowship. In fact I appreciate the potential of these groups, to contribute to the vision of a reconciling ministry of Jesus Christ which is often pastoral care for the other. More than my personal involvement in the existing groups I see myself as supporting and empowering the people to grow in their gifts and passions. Through prayer and discernment I will also encourage the creation of and involvement in new groups too.

LEARNING - EQUIPPING THE SAINTS FOR LIVING AND COMMUNICATING THE GOOD NEWS. Each member of the congregation is part of the priesthood of all believers. God "calls" each of us to active engagement with the world as followers of Christ. But we all have different gifts so cultivating an environment where people can share their gifts and grow as disciples both inside the formal church and in the world in general is very important. One venue in which I have developed leaders is in the traditional bible study. It has been a valuable place to lead people in a relational way to grow spiritually. However, it is not the only way. There is plenty of other extra biblical material available to feed on and grow. Most recently I have found a book by David E. Fitch, - Seven Practices for the Church on Mission - helpful in developing my framework for active engagement. Applied through Around the Well it has helped tremendously in creating a groups that attempts faithful Christian discipleship practices in the complex secularized world of UBC. In the end, no matter the method or resource, my prayer is to help develop the congregation and all who would be

involved to be able to work with people within and outside the church so that Christ's light is able to shine both inside and outside the doors of the sanctuary.

A FINAL NOTE In many ways I'm an active and outward looking person. I like to encourage others and consider myself teachable. I am respectful of differences and am willing to share my faith and knowledge from a confessional perspective. I find joy in fellowship and am energized by congregational life but... I also need time and space with my wife Janet and child Julian. Silence, private reflection, and prayer are important to me too. I will also encourage this aspect of life in the church.