



HIGHLANDS COMMUNITY CHURCH

HISTORY AND VISION FOR HIGHLANDS KENT

Our vision at Highlands has always been to help people find and follow Jesus. We've used different terminology over the years (for example, Win-Build-Send, and Know-Grow-Go) but our core DNA and mission have not changed. In fact, 70 years ago, before our founding Pastor Wally Wilson was receiving a salary, Highlands was sending and funding missionaries!

While the mission has not changed, strategies do change! We're always considering how we can best accomplish what God has called us to as a church. The story of how our Kent location came to be, goes back over a decade ago. We recognized then that Highlands Renton was at capacity, so began laying plans to build out the Renton property to its fullest potential. We had made significant progress towards the preparation for this build out, but the cost was too high. At the same time, we were advised by consultants to consider a different option; a multi site strategy.

We looked at several areas in proximity to Renton, but recognized that many of our people were traveling from the Fairwood and Kent area. The Lord blessed us and opened the door for us at Kentridge HS. We were very excited about how this multi site strategy would allow us to invest in people and staffing (vs. a building) and to reach many more people with the gospel. We launched the Inside Out project, with a faith goal of raising \$2 million. There were two components of the project, each requiring about half the funds: 1) to launch a location in Kent 2) to fix the parking lot problem in Renton. As we entered fundraising, the people of Highlands gave generously and sacrificially. At the same time, the economy crashed and significantly limited the amount that could be raised. In the end, we raised a little over \$1 million dollars- half of what was needed for the full Inside Out Project. The elders had to make a tough decision about where the funds would go. But in the end, the Lord made it clear that our top priority was to invest in launching a Kent location. And in the years since, we have been richly blessed to see Highlands Kent flourish and grow, as people continue to find and follow Jesus through the ministry!

STAFFING AT KENT

A common misconception is that we have separate Kent staff and Renton staff. In reality, we all consider ourselves both Renton and Kent staff. We are Highlands staff first! We are better together, and this plays out in so many instances. For example, our Student Ministries Director at Kent provides significant crossover support in multiple areas at Renton, as part of our broader Student Ministries staff team and the Next Gen staff team. Likewise, our kids ministry leader at Kent is also the team leader over all of our kids ministry staff, across Renton and Kent. This is likewise true of Adult Ministries, Worship Ministries, and Ministry Operations staff.

One other question that has been raised is in regards to the staffing transitions at Kent. It's important to recognize that there is a natural flow and intentionality behind these transitions. We are not simply hiring people to fill roles, but are building into their future. It is our joy and privilege to build into leaders and send them to where God is calling them. At the same time, we have made significant steps and investment towards increasing the opportunity for staff to grow while still serving at Kent- such as making the Student Ministries and Worship Director positions full time vs. part time.

UNITY IN NAMING AND LANGUAGE

We recognize that the naming and language we used could have been more intentional when Kent was first launched. The phrase "welcome to the Kent Campus" began to be used by default- when in reality, we should have been saying all along "welcome to Highlands" (in both Kent and Renton!). You will notice that more and more we are striving to use the terms Highlands Kent and Highlands Renton, as an indicator of our unity as one church, two locations.

HAVE WE LOOKED AT A PERMANENT FACILITY FOR KENT?

Yes, over the years we have looked at many different possibilities for a permanent facility. We have done site visits and worked with consultants. The reality is that finding the right property at the right price has been difficult. The area we live in is incredibly expensive to purchase property and/or a building. We have not yet found a solution that has the price, size, and quality to allow us to better carry out our vision than we are currently doing at Kentridge HS. That said, we are looking, and will continue to look, with intentionality!

LIVE PREACHING AT HIGHLANDS KENT

Pastor Jesse is looking forward to continuing regular live preaching at Kent during this season of transition! The intentional direction we are heading is to have consistent live preaching at both locations, by a teaching team, supplemented by occasional video teaching when strategic.

THANK YOU for being part of the mission.

We are continually blessed to see how God is at work through our Highlands locations in both Renton and Kent. Thank you for your continued support of the mission and vision of Highlands. May we together continue to help people find and follow Jesus as we bring the hope and healing of the gospel to our broken world!