

**HISTORY OF GOOD SHEPHERD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL**  
**Grace Lutheran Church, Osoyoos, B. C.**  
**1990-2016**

*- Ruth Knippelberg -*

The possibility of establishing a Christian School was first brought forward by Rick Wood after attending a Lutheran Church–Canada Convention in May 1988. He asked the Voters to consider this proposal and was encouraged to continue looking into this project. Pastor Sieg Redenbach had helped establish a Lutheran High School in the Lower Mainland previous to coming to Osoyoos to be our pastor, so it seemed the Lord had a plan for us and sent us a pastor that had a heart for Christian education.

Why a Christian Day School? Our first “Handbook for Parents” stated: The value of Christian childhood training is stated in Proverbs 22:6 — “Train up a child the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.” And again in Ephesians 6:4 — “Bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”

Our objective was to provide a basic education through instructional methods that emphasized Christian practices, teaching, and attitudes. Our purpose was to provide the opportunity for students to find identity, purpose, and power for their life in Christ by living in grace and the knowledge of Jesus as their Lord and Saviour, to develop their God-given gifts and abilities, and to take positive action in society as people of God.

A Lutheran Schools Exploration Group was formed and had their first meeting May 30, 1989, with Pastor Redenbach, Pastor and Mrs. Carlson of Oliver, Pastor Larsen of Oroville, and members of the congregation: Darlene Hillson, Rick Wood, ayne and Hope Miller, Gloria Fulcher, Rudy and Ruth Knippelberg. In December of 1989, the Voters approved the establishment of Good Shepherd Christian School. Because we would receive no funding from the government until we achieved one successful year, members of the congregation stepped forward and pledged enough funds so we could operate that first year. Praise God for those faithful people.

In September, 1990, Good Shepherd was set up for Kindergarten to Grade 3 with 11 students (2 more came in Nov.) and Ruth Knippelberg as teacher. Volunteers from the congregation helped in so many ways. Delores McNee offered to be librarian for both the church and school libraries. Fencing and a playground were in place. In April, 1991, Gerry Ensing from the Ministry of Education visited the school and approved, so we were now accredited and would receive 50% of the public school allotment per student. The Lord was blessing us in so many ways.

By September, 1991, enrolment was up to 19 with expansion to Grade 5, so Gloria Fulcher was hired as half-time aide. She had already given so much volunteer time in our first year of operation. A capital fund was established should the need for our own school building arise.

Our third year of operation opened with 32 students from Kindergarten to Grade 7 with Ruth Knippelberg teacher and Gloria Fulcher full-time aide.

In 1993 the Ken Moore family donated a 15 passenger van to be used to transport children from Oliver.

In 1993-94, our 4th year, it was apparent that we needed to have both a Primary and Intermediate class, so Wayne Miller became our Principal and Primary teacher. Ruth Knippelberg taught Grades 4-7. Gloria Fulcher continued as all around support.

Because of growing enrolments, the search for property to build a school began in earnest. Property belonging to the Richter family across the highway was considered but the costs of bringing the building up to public building code made it untenable. Then an orchard on Hwy. 97 and 100th street seemed the perfect setting, but after many pleas, arguments and persistent applications the Agricultural Land Commission made it clear they would not allow it to be rezoned. It seemed the Lord wanted us to remain in the Grace Lutheran Church building.

We thank the Lord for faithful, supportive pastors: Pastor Sieg Redenbach, Pastor Rod Buck, Pastor Charles Cooley, Pastor Darren Siegle.

TEACHERS: Mrs. Ruth Knippelberg 1990-2003

Mr. Wayne Miller, 1993-2006 Principal

Mrs. Angela Westcott 2002-2016 Principal (2006-2016)

Mrs. Heidi Giesbrecht 2003-2006

Mrs. Patricia Pearson 2004-2016

Mrs. Kim Shur 2006-2009

Mrs. Brenda Ens 2006-2012

Miss Chelsea Chapman 2012-2015

The Lord also blessed us with talented Educational Assistants: Gloria Fulcher, Thasha Maynard, Renee Marcotte, Angela McDermid, Karin Siegle, Joy Lamont, Rhonda Buck,

Dani LaHue, Susan Knox, and two of our own former students: Jenna Riznek and Sydney Fernandes.

Yes, the Lord blessed us also with so many parent volunteers who took care of the Scholastic Book orders, cooked hot lunches on some Fridays, provided transportation for field trips, helped with the numerous fund raisers, donated what was needed as needed. The Lord blessed us with faithful Prayer Partners from the congregation who upheld these children in prayer. We also need to thank Faithlife Financial for their matching grants throughout the years.

Along with the usual academic expectations, the children of Good Shepherd had so many great experiences to broaden their horizons.

- Dinner-Theatre presentations every year, then visits to our Seniors' homes sharing the music

- Participating in By Kids-For Kids outreach to so many countries, as well as sending Samaritan Christmas Shoeboxes where needed
- So many Field Trips: Grade 4-7 trips to Vancouver, Victoria, the Kootenays, Pines Bible Camp, Adam's River Salmon Run; O'Keefe Ranch in Vernon; Grist Mill in Keremeos;
- and so many local trips: the hospital; Public Library; Oliver Feedlot; Silviculture; Dental Office; Bible Fair at Penticton Christian School; Penticton, Oliver, Osoyoos Museums; Game Farm; Butterfly World; planting trees at Kilpoola Lake; Safety Village; Okanagan Children's Festival, to name a few
- Fun day at Mrs. Fulcher's home, Jump Rope for Heart; Skating; Skiing; Swimming; Sports Day in Penticton every June
- Yard Sales, Bake Sales, Read-a-thons, Decorating and riding on a float for Cherry Fiesta Parade, Halloween Bonfires
- Baking for the Mother's Day Tea; Inviting the congregation to a Passover meal; cooking ethnic meals for our families; "Thank You" plates of cookies to show our appreciation to the "special" people in our lives
- Lots of VISITORS: Mrs. June Barrie with a hand-made Christmas stocking for each child; Sherri Klein with her owls; the Bee Lady; teams from Science World; visits from missionaries working in Cameroon, Uganda, China, India, Guatemala, Mexico; Kiwanis Terrific Kid Awards; bands and choirs from other Christian schools
- Hat Days; Crazy Hair Days; Pajama Days; End of the Year Family Barbecue
- So many happy memories!

"Thank the Lord and sing His praise. Tell everyone what He has done" at Good Shepherd Christian School. May the Lord bless and preserve all those children and their families who are part of our school family and help them "walk with the King on the King's highway" so that we may all dine at that Heavenly banqueting table together one day in the presence of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.