



*Love God, Serve People, Grow in Christ*

## *Church Profile*

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# Who We Are

## What We Believe

Sonrise CRC values Reformed biblical teachings, recognizing the Bible as God's Word for salvation. The Christian church shares common beliefs with the world through three creeds, influenced by the Holy Spirit.

The Apostles' Creed, a fundamental truth of the Christian faith, consists of three parts: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Christians believe that the Bible reveals one God in three "persons." God is the loving, powerful heavenly Father who created heaven and earth, affirming the goodness of creation and its purpose. Jesus, as God's Son and God himself, fulfilled Old Testament prophecies about a Messiah who would redeem God's people. Jesus' life, death, and resurrection are based on historical fact. The Holy Spirit, promised by Jesus, has been with God's people since Pentecost, leading the church, uniting God's people, applying forgiveness, speaking to them, and encouraging godly living.

The CRC emphasizes certain teachings or Scriptural interpretations more than others, as they view the worldwide church as a body with individual organs contributing to its proper functioning. They often refer to their emphasis as speaking with a Reformed accent, emphasizing sovereignty, covenant, and kingdom. They believe in God's sovereignty, which includes His plan, will, and power. They believe that everything in the world, from nations to individuals' faith, is ultimately under God's control. They believe that humans cannot help themselves and need to ask for God's intervention. They are careful in their language about salvation, focusing on how God calls people into relationship with Him, urging them to say yes to God's offer of salvation in Jesus and offer their lives to God in return.

Covenant is a concept in the Bible that refers to Pentecost promises made to partners, forming a contract or treaty. God's promises are firm and generational, as seen in the Old Testament covenant with Israel. This emphasizes the importance of God acting first in the Christian community, as seen in infant baptism.

The Reformed accent on covenant extends to all human cultures worldwide, encompassing God's sovereign rule and sphere of influence. God's kingdom is evident in spiritual experiences, upholding creation, and in actions, lives, technology, artistry, and institutions. God calls each person to participate in spreading His kingdom, restoring God's creation in every aspect of our lives. This kingdom focus means that the denomination has been actively involved in unique kingdom-building activities, demonstrating that God's grace is a gift that cannot be earned.

God is the number one in the world, with all events under His sovereign control. God's promises are generational and not just for individuals. The Old Testament covenant with Israel encourages adult Jews to repent and believe, receiving the Holy Spirit. God's reign is evident in spiritual experiences and upholding creation. Jesus inaugurated the kingdom of God, and despite sin and brokenness, God's kingdom is present and will be brought in full. We pray and act for this kingdom to come.

## History

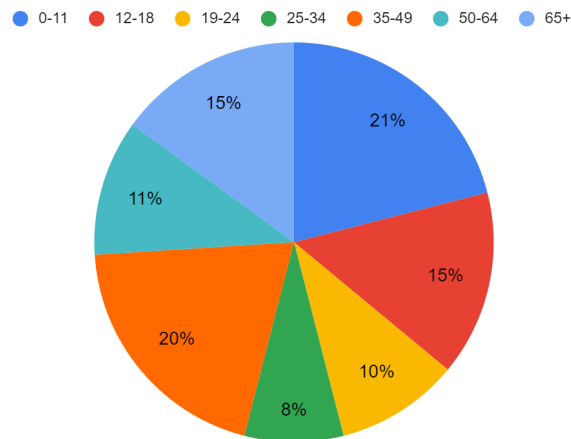
We're thankful to share our story. To God be the glory! Sunrise Christian Reformed Church was established in Ponoka, AB in 1985 after 3 attempts. In 1992, our congregation lost a significant number of members with the start-up of a United Reformed Church within the Ponoka community. Sunrise CRC is a congregation made up of long-time residents and many newcomers. We are fulfilling our mission through worship and serving God in our fellowship, work and relationships in the broader community. Our history shows how God works and provides for his children. Sunrise CRC seeks to encourage spiritual growth through ministries for numerous groups.

From the start of our establishment of Sunrise, we have had five pastors leading our congregation from the establishment to the current day. Peter J. Boodt was the pastor for Sunrise from 1986-1996. Following him, we had Andrew Van Muyen, Harry D.Zantingh, Willem J Delleman, and Brian P. Schouten.

We took on the opportunity to build an addition and renovation in 2014 during Willem J Delleman's time at Sunrise. We currently have Pastor Henry Steenbergen as our interim and church counselor.

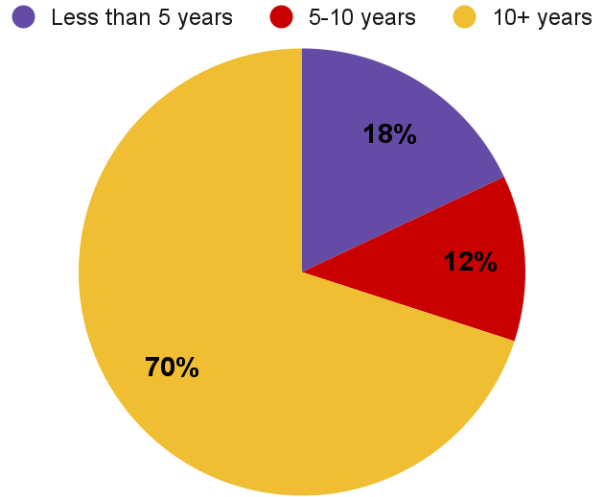
## Membership

We are an average-sized and active church consisting of 185 participants on average, including confessing members (165) and regular attendees. Our size and age distribution remain stable. Our membership currently belongs to the following age groups in the percentages indicated below:



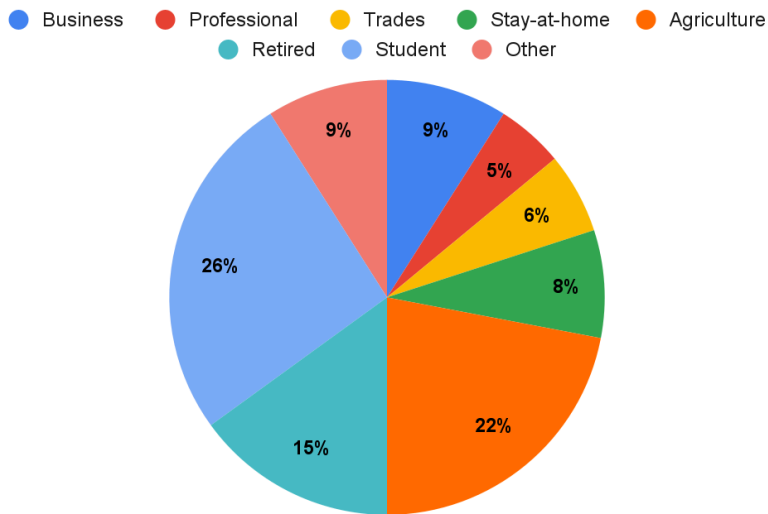
The largest age group consists of kids aged 0-11 years old, and middle-aged adults aged 35-49 years of age. Both age groups together make up 41% of our congregation. Within Sunrise, we have a wide variety of age groups but 39% of our church members are between the ages of 0 and 24. Newcomers to Sunrise CRC comment on the diversity of age groups within our congregation, as well as the large number of children. Sunrise CRC focuses greatly on their programs for their children and youth to help teach and grow children of God in faith.

Our members belonging to the congregation are shown as a percentage below

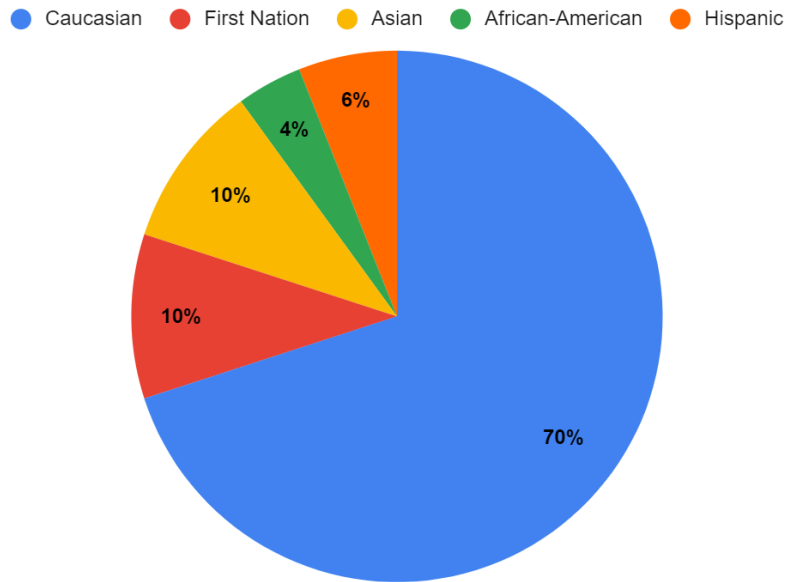


70% of the members of Sonrise who have belonged to the church community for over 10+ years. Sonrise CRC focuses on building a church family and community to welcome, support and love one another.

With many different occupations, members that are either students or involved in agriculture were the top two for Sonrise CRC, both over 20%.



Our community of Ponoka, AB has a range of ethnic diversity with Caucasians being the highest at 70%.



## Sunday Morning

### Worship Services

Sonrise values biblical preaching, personal growth, and community worship. The Worship Committee and Director plan services, collaborating with the pastor and staff. The congregation follows a traditional order with a blend of traditional and contemporary-structured music. A praise team leads the services twice a month, and special services are planned by ministries like GEMS, Cadets, Youth Groups, and Sunday School. Multi-generational participation is encouraged. We love to worship God together as a congregation to offer our praise and thanksgiving to our Lord in fellowship.

A typical Sunday morning worship service at Sonrise CRC is as follows:

- Two Pre-worship songs that are presented on the overhead screens
- Service starts at 10:30 am with a welcome and announcements by a serving elder
- Followed by another song, God's greeting, and Call to Worship
- The congregation sings 2-3 more songs
- Then the children go up to the front for a children's message which they are free to go to Sunday School
- A Deacon gives a prayer for understanding and for the offering that goes to the church and one external organization each Sunday. A song is sung during the offering.

- A scripture reading is read and presented on the two overheads to follow along, followed by the message and concluded with a prayer and a song of response.
- A congregational prayer takes place
- The Pastor leads us in the words of sending and God's parting blessing, and the service ends with a parting song.

The easiest way to sit in on a Sunday morning worship service is to watch one of the recorded services online: <https://www.sonriseponoka.com/sermons>

Greeters welcome people as members and newcomers enter the building. Ushers welcome them as they enter the auditorium and allow them to find a seat on their own or assist in finding a seat. All of the songs and Bible readings are projected onto two screens. The worship leader and pastor will let people know when to stand and when to sit down, as well as any readings for the congregation will be indicated.

Our worship service is designed for emphasis on believers and has a blended style of music.

Sonrise CRC welcomes people from all backgrounds and ages to come together for worship and a meaningful experience. <https://www.sonriseponoka.com/>

## Purpose Statement

Our purpose statement is:

**Love God, Serve People, Grow in Christ**

## Core Values

- Strong Biblical Foundation
- Prayerful Dependence on God
- Vibrant Inspirational Worship
- Effective Children and Youth Ministry
- Encourage Lifelong Spiritual Growth in Christ
- Genuine Mutual Care for One-Another
- Hospitable and Welcoming
- Develop Strong Christ-like Leadership
- Generous Giving of Time, Money and Talents
- Serving and Reaching Out in the Community



## Visioning Goals

1. Find a pastor experienced in ministry to fulfill a new mission
2. Youth Director (half-time)
3. Start and develop a Men's Ministry
4. Inter-generational "WE" Ministry
5. Separate Fellowship and Outreach into two separate committees
6. Welcome and Hospitality
7. Music Development

## Job Description

*Church Order Art 12. A.*

- a. A minister of the Word serving as a pastor of a congregation shall preach the Word, administer the sacraments, conduct public worship services, catechize the youth, and train members for Christian service. The minister, with other office-bearers, shall supervise the congregation and fellow office-bearers, exercise admonition and discipline, see to it that everything is done decently and in order, exercise pastoral care over the congregation, and engage in and promote the work of evangelism and diaconal outreach.*

Under God's guidance, with the support of the Sunrise Council, the pastor is to use his God-given skills to lead the church of Jesus Christ to fulfill the New Testament purposes of outreach, worship, fellowship, discipleship, and service

## Qualifications

- The pastor will be a person who exhibits maturity and devotion to Christ
- The pastor shall possess a working knowledge of the Biblical Word
- The pastor practices good stewardship of time, talents, finances, and physical creations (Gen 1:27-28, Ps 8:6-8)
- Demonstrates personal growth and an eagerness to learn in and model being a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ
- Demonstrate a commitment to the congregational member(s) by establishing relationships and spiritual guidance
- The pastor shall be filled with love and possess the fruits of the spirit (Gal. 5:22-23)
- Valid Driver's license with access to a reliable vehicle
- Able to be ordained in the Christian Reformed Church

## Pastoral Responsibilities

### **1. Leadership & Administration 30%**

- Inspire, encourage, model and embrace Sonrise's vision for the specific ministries of pastoral care, youth, young adults, congregational members and outreach.
- Lead holiday/special services including Good Friday, Ascension Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and New Year's Eve
- To provide continual support and encouragement to the various ministerial leaders of Sonrise CRC.
- Maintain communications with staff and volunteers to ensure administrative tasks of the church are being carried out efficiently.
- Attend leadership meetings: Elders, Admin, Full Consistory, Worship Committee, Youth Leadership, Regional Denominational and the Ponoka Ministerial Association.
- Conduct weddings, baptisms, communion and funerals
- Teaches Profession of Faith classes as required
- Perform such other responsibilities as from time to time deemed necessary by Council to accomplish the role.

### **2. Worship & Preaching 40%**

- Lead weekly worship up to four (4) Sundays per month. If there is a fifth Sunday, pulpit supply will be arranged by the Council to ensure time for rest/planning/administrative/pastoral duties. The fifth Sunday may be exchanged for another Sunday in that or the following month at the discretion of the pastor and elders.
- Prepare and deliver the message based on the biblical text.
- Regular Administration of the Sacraments
- Lead the congregational member(s) of Sonrise CRC in worship and prayer •  
Work collaboratively with the Worship Director to prepare the order of worship and songs.

### **3. Outreach/Community Engagement 10%**

- Personally share (witness); defend (apologetics) the faith; and lead the church in reaching out to the lost, in receiving them.
- To give guidance to the implementation of the Fellowship and Outreach teams
- Encourage, train and support the leadership involved with the Outreach Ministry
- Encourage and equip the congregation in the area of outreach.
- Ensure a path for new member(s) growth and enfolding its people to live a life in Christ.
- Engages in the community through involvement in committees and ministerial as a speaker and/or facilitator or volunteer in key community endeavours according to passion, giftedness and interest.

- Respond to personal and community needs by partaking in the Ponoka Ministerial Meetings.

#### **4. Congregational Relations/Pastoral Care 10%**

- Foster a nurturing Christian community.
- Possess relational skills that enable him to provide personal and cooperative pastoral care via home visitations, involvement of small groups and catechism, and guidance to the youth to give spiritual direction and community building.
- The pastor will lead and cultivate the culture of care at Sunrise Christian Reformed Church in order to equip and enable its congregational members to *“love the Lord your God... and your neighbor as yourself.”* Luke 10.27-28.
- Proactively identifies problems/challenges and offers creative solutions for resolution (conflict management).

#### **5. Discipleship 5%**

- Raise, teach and nurture disciples making disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. This will include:
  - providing training and resources for teachers/facilitators of various discipleship ministries
  - assisting in Catechism preparation as requested by Catechism teachers.

#### **6. Professional Development/ Personal Growth 5%**

- Dedicate time to personal spiritual development (Prayer, reading, theology course or other development approved by Council)
- Participate in extracurricular church activities according to interest

### Other Details

- Salary will be paid annually in 12 payments.
- Telephone and computer software upgrades at the expense of Sunrise CRC
- Minister pension contribution as set by Synod
- Health/Dental Insurance premiums coverage expenses of Sunrise CRC
  - Option to have a designated health benefit allowance of \$5000.00 instead of the CRC benefit plan

- Automobile expenses to be paid to the Minister as per the recorded mileage log as per CRA
- Allowance of 4 weeks vacation time may be taken on an annual basis. Three of the four weeks may be taken consecutively each year.
- Sonrise CRC Sabbatical Policy
- Annual continuing education/ professional allowance as per annual budget. Requests may be brought forth to Council
- Evaluations will be conducted on an annual basis with Pastoral Elders in February or March.
- Obtain and submit CPIC Criminal Record Clearance Check and Vulnerable Sector Search to Admin.
- Standard cost of living increases 3% annually.

## Sabbatical Policy

### Intended Purpose and Use of Sabbatical Leave

The Sabbatical Leave is a period away from the pastor's regular duties, offered to its pastors by the church, for the mutual benefit of the church and the pastor. Its purpose is to provide the pastor opportunities for exposure to and study of new ideas, improvement of professional skills relevant to the ministry, development of the pastor's spiritual resources, and spiritual and physical renewal and refreshment.

### Eligibility

A pastor is entitled to two weeks of sabbatical for every year of service. The first sabbatical eligible after the completion of four years of employment at the Sonrise Christian Reformed Church. Alternative study leave arrangements may be considered by Council in addition to the Sabbatical Leave. Since the Sabbatical Leave is for the long-term benefit of the congregation, church staff, and the individual pastor, the pastor may only apply for a Sabbatical Leave with the clear intent of returning to full ministry for at least one full year beyond the conclusion of the Sabbatical.

### Application Procedure

Application for a Sabbatical Leave is to be prepared by the pastor and submitted to Council for its approval. Council requests that the application be submitted, within a sufficient timeframe of six months before the leave, to allow for the suitable replacement of an interim pastor. It then will be brought forth to the congregational members of Sonrise Christian Reformed Church for its information.

It is expected that the application submitted will contain the following components;

1. A clear descriptive statement of the purpose and goals for the leave;
2. A projected proposal of intent containing the purpose and articulated goals which may consist of, but not be limited to continual educational courses, academic/theological studies, reading and writing material, pastoral care, etc."
3. The envisioned benefit of the pastor's personal, spiritual and professional development.
4. The benefit of the Congregational members and church ministry.
5. Any other issues Council deems as important/relevant information.

Furthermore, it is expected that within two months following the Sabbatical, the pastor will present an oral and written report of his experiences and studies accomplished to Council and the Congregation. To give testimony to the developmental and spiritual growth and insights gained while on Sabbatical Leave reflecting the benefits of both beneficiaries being the pastor and the church.

### Financial Arrangements

Sonrise Christian Reformed Church will provide full remuneration (salary and benefits) to the pastor while on Sabbatical. Sonrise Christian Reformed Church will pay to cover the cost of replacement interim pastor preaching and other ministerial-related duties while on sabbatical. The Sabbatical Leave will be considered separate and distinct from the annual budgeted continued education allowance and professional allowance fund.

To cover the pastor's costs while on Sabbatical leave, the pastor is encouraged to search out grants/scholarships/donations/funds for expenses incurred. If financial assistance from these sources is deemed inadequate, the Council will be receptive to a request from the pastor to help assist in covering these costs. These expenses may be about professional development courses, registration, tuition, books and or travel. Such requests should be submitted in advance of budget planning for the fiscal year in which the sabbatical will occur. A leave may not be used to accept paid employment. The opportunity for occasional preaching assignments may be accepted if included in the Sabbatical Leave Proposal Plan. These opportunities should be kept to a minimum so that the benefits of the prepared plans and goals may be achieved while on leave. Requests to officiate weddings, baptisms and funerals may be accepted, provided they do not interfere with the approved sabbatical plan.

## Organization Structure

### Church Council

The Church Council at Sonrise CRC consists of five Pastoral Elders, two Youth Elders, two Administrative Elders, and four Deacons, plus the Pastor who serves as an ex-officio member (non-voting). As a body, they meet six times a year. The reasoning behind this is to allow each group; Consistory (Pastoral Elders), Administrative (committee of the church council)

and diaconate (Deacons) to have more time to carry out their respective tasks and avoid long drawn-out meetings. Each group meets every month and reports back to the Full Council.

Church Council members are nominated by way of an advisory vote process, discernment of the sitting office bearers, and by the casting of lots during a Sunday worship service. Keeping in mind God's given talents and gifts, ballots contain one suggestion for each open position. Members serve for a three-year term with the opportunity to serve up to 5 consecutive years. Ordinarily, office bearers are not eligible for renomination for two years to allow for time of rest.

The Pastoral Elders focus their ministry on the faith formation and community life of the congregation.

The Youth Elders focus their ministry on continuing to provide a dedicated and effective youth program at Sonrise CRC. They oversee the GEMS, Cadets, Catechism, Young People, and Young Adult programs and implement the Safe Church Policy.

The Administration Team consists of the two Elders (Council Chair and Clerk), church treasurer, bookkeeper and up to two administratively gifted congregational members. They focus their ministry on administrative matters that provide the framework for the congregation's life and ministry.

The Diaconate focuses its ministry on the matters of stewardship, hospitality and benevolence. Sonrise CRC Diaconate consists of both males and females. You may view the Council members and staff at <https://www.sonriseponoka.com>

## Staff and Ministry Directors

Sonrise CRC congregational members are greatly blessed with many God-given talents and gifts that allow the church to run its various programs offered to the young and old alike.

We currently have the following staff and ministry directors:

1. Senior Pastor - Vacant - (Pastor Henry Steenbergen presently serving as interim)
2. Secretary - Part Time - Trienke Hellinga
3. Treasurer - Volunteer - Jaap Dominicus
4. Bookkeeper - Part Time - Martie Greyling
5. Safe Church - Youth Elders
6. Worship Director - Part Time - Nathalie Kroneman
7. Choir Director - Volunteers - Enny Van Aken. Accompanist - Willeke Kraay
8. Youth Leader - Church Elders and Volunteers - Joshua and Femke Lubach
9. Young Adults - Volunteers - Karen Pierik, Cor and Cathy Haagsma
10. Cadets - Volunteer - Arjan Dominicus
11. GEMS - Volunteer - Woulien Spelt

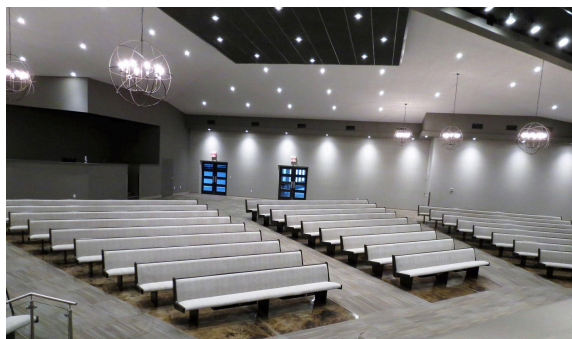
12. Nursery - Volunteer - Cayleigh Sperber and Tracey Elgersman
13. Sunday School - Volunteer - Inge Bergman
14. Vacation Bible School - Val Van Aken
15. Sunrise Book Club - Volunteer - Tarina Du Toit
16. Stephen Ministry - Volunteers - Bonnie Wheatley, Joanne Schokking and John Hulsman
17. Coffee Break - Volunteers - Karen Pierik, Winnie De Vries and Carien Dominicus
18. Fellowship and Outreach - Volunteers
19. Young Women's Bible Study - Volunteer - Val Van Aken
20. Small Groups - Otto Nieuwland

## Facilities

### Church Building and Floor Plan

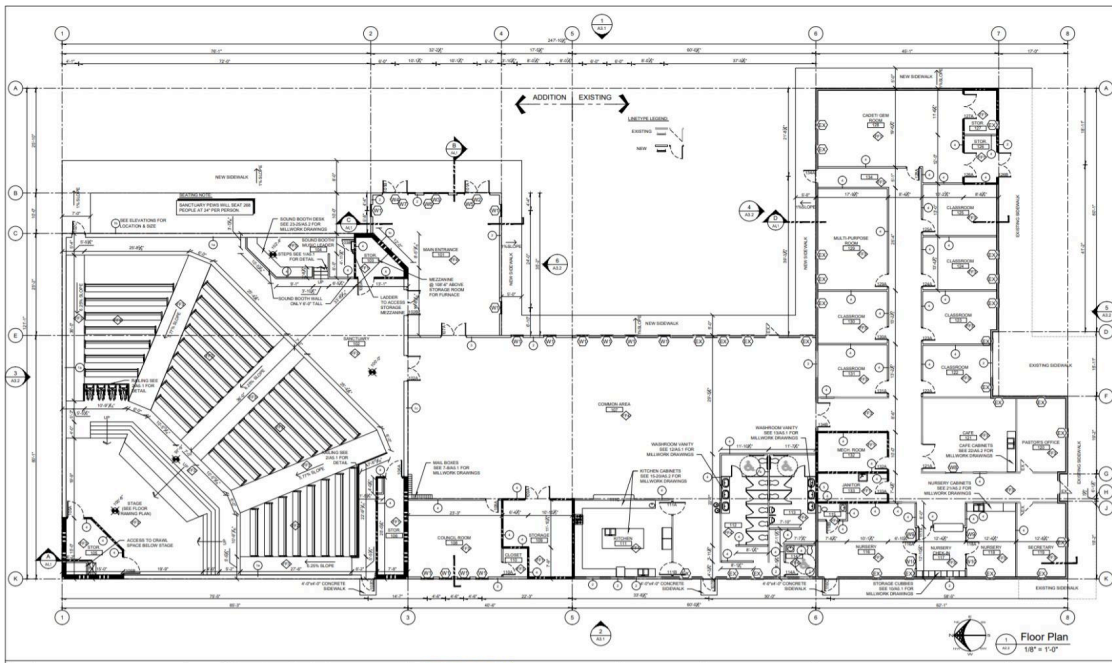


Sonrise CRC has a large welcoming lobby where ushers will welcome churchgoers and hand out bulletins before the service. The worship assembly area contains comfortable pews with seating of 268 people with extra room available. The stage is raised allowing for good visibility lines. There are two overhead projection screens as well as wheelchair-accessible seating with railing.



The traffic flow from the sanctuary to the common area was designed so worship attendees could connect over coffee and refreshments following the service. The ample space provides the ability for tables and chairs to be set up with a storage room located directly off the

common area. The kitchen is located just off the common area which has worked well for potluck dinners and gatherings. It comes equipped with a commercial dishwasher, stoves and sink prep areas.



Across the common area, there are six classrooms used for Sunday School classes. The multi-purpose room features a comfortable couch and foosball table for the children to use. The nursery was designed to have a separate space for sleeping infants and those active at play. The nursery comes equipped with a TV for those volunteers wanting to see the service. The cafe is a comfortable gathering space equipped with couches, a TV, and a table with chairs. The Cadet and GEMS room provides a good working area for all crafts and projects they may have on the go. Administrative offices are located on the South end of the building.



Outside there is a paved parking lot with ample parking spaces. Wheelchair-accessible parking stalls are conveniently located close to the entrance. On the west side of the church, there is a gated playground with benches.



## Building Expansion



By 2014, our church building was limited in comparison to its growth. We required more classrooms, a larger sanctuary and a fellowship hall. Hence a building committee was established. In January 2016, Sonrise CRC was blessed with a new sanctuary and renovated fellowship hall as well as a renovated nursery area and classrooms.



## Finances

Sonrise CRC provides its members with a guideline for giving, based on its current membership. Recognizing that giving is a response of gratitude based on faith and what God has first given us.

*As we read in 2 Corinthians 9:6-8 “Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God so loves a cheerful giver. And God can make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.”*

We thank all Sonrise CRC supporters for their generous giving and support and pray that the Lord continues to bless Sonrise so that we may extend that blessing to those around us.

### Income and Expenses 2023 vs Budget 2024

	<b>Actual 2023</b>	<b>Budget 2023</b>	<b>Budget 2024</b>
<b>Income</b>	\$347,858.16		
<b>Expenses</b>			
Administration	\$8,678	\$10,723	\$11,000
Ministry Shares	\$53,175	\$53,175	\$57,195
Facilities	\$37,069	\$45,800	\$61,900
Programs	\$8,115	\$13,150	\$15,150
Technology	\$13,863	\$7,000	\$7,000
Education	\$4,148	\$8,750	\$8,750
Staff	\$106,026	\$140,250	\$150,847
Interest Bank Charges	\$22,597	\$22,000	\$22,500

Other	\$14,075	\$16,050	\$16,300
Mortgage	\$65,000	\$60,000	\$40,000
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$332,746</b>	<b>\$376,898</b>	<b>\$390,642</b>

The facility's budget has increased with a \$11,500 renovation line added to the 2024 budget. The staff has increased with the hire of a secretary in 2024.

We continue to be in awe of God's provisions for Sunrise CRC.

### Giving to Special Causes 2023

Our congregation has the privilege of assisting the deacons to respond to the needs of the poor and to give financial support to local, regional and national ministries not necessarily supported by ministry shares. Last year these were:

Broom Tree	\$3,438.60
Bethel CRC - Mission trip	\$ 600.00
C.A Pregnancy Care Centre	\$4,758.35
Central Alberta Christian High School	\$3,159.85
Cadets - Head Office	\$ 716.25
Cadets - Sunrise	\$1,275.00
Compassion Canada	\$1,394.00
Gems - Head Office	\$ 923.25
Gems - Sunrise	\$1,175.00
Haitian Children's Aid Society	\$ 780.10
Lacombe Christian School	\$1,647.00
Living Truth Christian School	\$1,083.50
Local Benevolence	\$ 50.00
Mercy Ships	\$2,239.75
Ministry to the Seafarers	\$1,641.75
Mustard Seed	\$1,148.25
N.A.I.M	\$6,717.70
New Ground	\$ 386.00
One Book	\$ 694.75
Ponoka Christian School	\$2,050.65
Ponoka Community Growing Project	\$6,477.50
Ponoka Food Bank	\$8,226.20
Ponoka Youth Centre	\$2,267.25

Reframe Ministries	\$ 773.35
Rehoboth	\$2,994.10
Resonate	\$2,894.75
Samaritan's Purse	\$ 850.00
Shalom Counseling	\$1,386.00
World Renew	\$2,676.00
World Renew World Hunger	\$3,846.00
World Renew Refugees	\$ 666.00
World Renew Canadian Foodgrains Bank	\$7,324.25
Youth Unlimited Kaysey Bajema	\$4,429.55
Youth Unlimited Nathalie Kroneman	\$4,422.70
YWAM Chelsea Vreugdenhil	\$7,504.80

## Programs

### Praise and Worship

**Choir** - Rehearsals typically begin at the end of September in preparation for the Christmas season. The choir's songs are shared with people in the local community; Rimoka, Seasons, Blackfalds Faith Community Church and Sonrise CRC itself on Christmas Day. Rimoka and Seasons are both senior living facilities.

**Praise Team** - "Full Effect" is a group of musically talented members who lead worship services on the second and fourth Sundays of the month. Alongside dedicated sound and overhead operators, they also partake in the Christmas program.

**Worship Committee** - This committee consists of six members including one Council liaison and the Worship Director. Monthly meetings are held to discuss and review the various aspects of Sonrise CRC's services; including music, sermon themes and presentation, quality of in-house and online sound, etc. and assist in putting together certain specialty services that may be held. Ex. reading service.

*"But I Trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation. I will sing the Lord's praise, for he has been good to me." (Psalm 13:5-6)*

### Nursery Program

**Nursery** - Nursery is provided every Sunday during the service for children between the ages of 0 to 3 years old. This year there were 8 to 10 regular children attending plus visitors. Mothers who have children in the nursery take turns being the nursery supervisor for two consecutive

weeks. There are two adult volunteers and one youth helper each Sunday. These volunteers can follow along with the service as there is a TV provided.

## Children Programs

**Children's Message** - During almost every Sunday worship service, a group of dedicated volunteers will provide an engaging message for all children in the sanctuary before Sunday School class. This message relates to the sermon preached on that given Sunday.

**Sunday School** - Helping children grow in faith! This is what Sunday School is all about. It is a place where children get the opportunity to experience God by listening to His stories through activities, games and singing/listening to songs.

This year Sunrise CRC is using the DWELL curriculum from Faith Alive. It invites children to live into God's story of creation, fall, redemption, and restoration. It encourages children to live out God's story every day as they respond to God's call. Each session provides fun and interactive ways for leaders and children to learn and explore together.

There are currently 50+ children attending regularly. The program is offered to all those ages Pre-school (age 3) to Grade 4. Children, parents (guardians) and helpers bless this program and help it to run smoothly.

Each Sunday, there is a classroom collection for the two sponsored children, Janani and Ana, through Compassion Canada. It is the hope to be able to sponsor one more in the coming year.

**Vacation Bible School** - This year there is Family VBS where families can come together to play games, have snacks and make a progressive family craft as well as a time to join in praise and worship. The dates will be July 8th, 10th and 11th from 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm. It provides the opportunity to get to know other families within Sunrise CRC and the community.

**Cadets** - Cadet meetings include a Bible lesson, a project, and some time for fun and games. This season started with a successful joint campout with the GEMS. The club has been blessed with 30 boys. The winter fun activity was held at the Tube Park at Canyon in Red Deer once again. The entire church was invited for a fun family tubing event.

As Cadets, they participate in Central Alberta events including, Cadet Sunday, Snow Derby, Kub Kar Jamboree and a spring campout. The International Camporee (Camp Hickory), which takes place every three years, was held in Dunnville, Ontario last year. Twelve members of Sunrise CRC Cadet Club were able to attend the week-long camp.

Funds are raised through their annual bottle drive collection. This fundraiser covers most of the Cadet Club's cost over the year.

**GEMS** - (Girls Everywhere Meeting the Savior). The theme for the 2023/2024 season is Rise Up; Lessons from Queen Esther. In eight lessons, the GEMS club learns that God is King, God is our Deliverer, God is Trustworthy, God is always at work, and God is with you wherever you go.

This year, 52 girls were registered in GEMS. Registration night was hosted at the end of September which included an evening of games, supper and a bouncy house. Thanksgiving Breakfast for the congregation was hosted alongside the Sunrise CRC Cadet Club. Girls were able to enjoy a fall campout with a combined church service with the Cadets. Regular GEMS evenings are held every other Thursday from 6:45-8:30 pm. GEMS opens with a big group Bible lesson, ice breaker activity, GEMS Aim and songs. Afterwards, the group splits off into smaller groups where the younger-aged girls follow the curriculum and the older girls work on their badge work.

Each year GEMS hosts the father/daughter night which is always well attended. A GEMS Christmas party was held in December as well as the bake sale and calendar fundraiser. This year, GEMS is hoping to bring back the grand friend Bingo night as well as attend the local GEMS Kub Kar races.

## Youth Programs

**Young People and Catechism** - While Cadets and GEMS are providing programs for youth up to at least grade 9, the focus on the young people is based on those from grades 9 -12. Young people meet every Tuesday night during the winter season. The evening starts with good snacks, followed by a catechism lesson and games to close the evening. This past season, the youth started off learning from the Youth Alpha course. It is a 9-week series easy to create a space where youth will be engaged and excited in conversation about faith. Following this, the season concluded with the lessons focused on "The Ten Commandments of Dating" written by Ben Young and Dr. Samuel Adams.

Besides Catechism, fun activities are planned for Sunrise CRC youth to participate in (paintballing, gym night) as well as for the youth from other Christian Reformed Churches in central Alberta. Sunrise CRC hosted the first rally with games, food and a speaker on a beautiful Sunday afternoon this past October. Almost 120 youth and leaders attended. The current plan is to host 5-6 activities per season.

This year, a total of eight youth and three leaders from Sunrise CRC will be joining Bethel CRC on a mission trip to Mexico. The youth will stay at a YWAM mission base in Tijuana and build a house for residents in need.

To raise funds for the Young People's program, the youth will be taking part in the highway cleanup in May. Not only do they raise funds for their program to run but they also raise awareness about taking care of God's creation.

*“Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” Matthew 19:14*

## Young Adult Programs

**Young Adults** - Everyone eighteen years or older and all those still young at heart are welcome to the Young Adults program. Young adults meet once a month during the winter season on a Sunday afternoon to share a meal, socialize and discuss current developments from a Christian perspective.

**Young Women’s Bible Study** - Program offered to all young women to gather in a casual setting and learn more about the Bible. Meetings are held every third Tuesday. This year, the group will be reading and discussing Matthew 5; the Beatitudes. What is God guiding us to? What does blessed mean?

## Adult Programs

**Coffee Break** - Coffee Break is a ladies' program run on Wednesday mornings at our church Cafe. This winter, the group is studying the Heidelberg Catechism. All ladies of any age are welcome to join. Coffee is on at 9:30 am, devotions and fellowship at 9:45 am, followed by the study till 11:00 am. Nursery is provided and the Little Lambs program is there for the older children.

**Sonrise Book Club** - The book club meets every 4-6 weeks at the church library. There are always entertaining discussions with coffee/tea and snacks. Some of the books they have read this past year were Women Talking by Miriam Toews, The Power of One by Bryce Courtney, Behind Beautiful Forevers by Katherine Boo, Spilled Milk by KL Randis, and Once Upon a Wardrobe by Patti Calahan.

Future books on their list are The Storied Life of AJ Fikry by Gabrielle Zevin, Five Little Indians by Michelle Good, The Return by Nicholas Sparks and A Life Without Water by Marci Bolden.

Everyone is welcome to join, even just for one book discussion that you may be interested in.

**Small Groups** - There are currently five bible study groups that are meeting two times a month. Each group decides on what material they would like to study that year.



## Ministries

At Sunrise CRC, we are inspired to provide faithful ministries of service to one another, the larger community, and the world. It is our responsibility to equip God's people to do His work and build up His church, the body of Christ.

*“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.”*

Matthew 28:19-20

In addition to administering benevolence within our church community, Sunrise CRC supports various missionaries and causes.

*Our local missionaries include:*

**Sean and Becky Folkerts with N.A.I.M** (*North American Indigenous Ministries*) - NAIM is a multi-cultural team that exists to glorify God through building the Church by making disciples among North American Indigenous peoples, to reach the world of Christ.

Background Story: Back in 2009, the Folkerts Family were granted permanent private guardianship of their four youngest children. Due to this momentous occasion, the seeds of love and compassion for their First Nations brothers and sisters were planted. In the Summer of 2016, this family was led to serve and become involved in two churches located in Maskwacis, Alberta; The Louis Bull All Nations Church and the Maskwacis Bible Fellowship Church. It is here that they as a family lead and attend youth, men, boys and girls groups as well as family camps. [NAIM | North America Indigenous Ministries](#)

**Tom Cnossen with NCEM** (*Northern Canada Evangelical Mission*) - NCEM is an interdenominational Christian organization that seeks to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the Native peoples of Canada.

Background Story: While Tom and Donna Cnossen were attending a Prairie Bible Institution Mission conference, they heard about NCEM and its important missionary work. Feeling called, the Cnossens' became actively involved in church planting and disciplining through various locations in both Manitoba and Saskatchewan where they served from 1986 - 2007. In the year 2007, they moved to central Alberta, their present location. Here they began to serve the four Maskwacis reserves and helped develop and lead the Maskwacis Bible Fellowship Church as well as its bible study and youth groups. Tom Cnossen founded the "Higher Challenge" wilderness camps which are geared towards reaching out to the youth. [Cnossen, Tom & Donna | NCEM](#)

**Nathalie Kroneman and Kaysey Bajema with Youth Unlimited** - Youth Unlimited provides programs throughout Central Alberta to connect youth to Christ. Their focus is on bringing hope

and wellness to youth through mentoring relationships. Their youth engagement staff runs programs for youth in 8 different communities (Lacombe, Ponoka, Red Deer, Sylvan Lake, Crestomere, Rimbey and Blackfalds.) Both Nathalie and Kaysey are youth engagement staff who work through the Ponoka program and are members of Sonrise CRC.

Across Central Alberta, Youth Unlimited provides a young mothers program called “Stepping Stones.” They have established three youth drop-in centers, a housing program for vulnerable youth, a counselling program that offers subsidized counselling, various youth programs and the establishment of two coffee shops. These coffee shops offer a ministry space, build community and provide special attention to students and youth. One of these shops is located right here in Ponoka. (Timber Coffee Co.) Their location is at 4820 Hwy 2A. [Youth Engagement & Programs in Lacombe | Central Alberta Youth Unlimited \(cayu.ca\)](#)

*Global Missions:*

**Chelsea Vreugdenhil with YWAM** (*Youth with a Mission*) -YWAM is a global movement of Christians from many cultures, age groups and Christian traditions, dedicated to serving Jesus throughout the world.

Background Story: Chelsea, a baptized member of Sonrise CRC, completed her six-month Discipleship Training School program in Kona in 2023. This program included three months of on-site training as well as missionary work in Paraguay. At the time of completion, Chelsea continued to train and work as a staff member with YWAM to lead a DTS group of her own. This DTS group had the privilege to go to Central Asia and spread the gospel.

Having the understanding that a solid biblical foundation is crucial for life in missions, Chelsea has opted to attend Disciple Bible School in Amsterdam this coming Spring. [Youth With A Mission — To know God and to make Him known \(ywam.org\)](#)

Within our local community, Sonrise CRC helps out by collecting gifts for Santa’s Anonymous.

We have collections to help these missionaries, as well as these various causes:

**Local**

Ponoka Food Bank  
Ponoka Youth Centre  
Ponoka Growing Project  
Pregnancy Care Center  
Broom Tree Foundation  
Shalom Counseling  
Mustard Seeds Red Deer

**Abroad**

World Renew - World Renew, Refugee Program  
Woman of Hope  
Disaster Response Service (as needed)  
Resonate Global Missions  
Canadian Food Grains Bank  
Rehoboth  
Mercy Ships

Ponoka Christian School  
Central Alberta Christian High School  
Living Truth Christian School  
Lacombe Christian School

Newground  
Seafarers - General, Literature fund  
One Book  
Haitian Children's Aid Society

## **Stephen Ministries**

*Mission Statement:* Serving to organize, equip, empower and guide lay caregivers to provide one-to-one, distinctly Christian care to those who are hurting in our congregation and community.

Back in 2019, Sonrise CRC hosted a Discovery Weekend - Vision Ministry workshop. All members of the congregation were welcome to attend to discern the direction, goals, struggles and strengths Sonrise CRC may be facing. Hence the theme, “Rooted in God’s Word, Growing Together, Branching Out in Faith” was established. An Implementation Team was created to set the wheels in motion and work on the discoveries of that workshop. After careful research, deliberation and workshop attendance, the Stephen Ministry program was adopted.

In Acts 6, Stephen was among those chosen to provide caring ministry to those in need. Since Jesus’ time, caring ministry has been the hallmark of the Christian faith community.

More than 13,000 congregations have Stephen Ministry - representing over 180 denominations, all 50 states, all 10 Canadian Provinces and 30 other countries.

Stephen Ministers are members of the congregation trained to provide one-to-one Christ-centered care. They have a compassionate heart for those who are hurting, and they are equipped with caring ministry skills by the congregation’s Stephen Leaders. The Stephen Minister typically has one care receiver at a time and meets with that person once a week to listen, care, pray, encourage, and offer emotional and spiritual support. These Ministers began their extensive training and were commissioned at Sonrise CRC the following.

Stephen Leaders are the lay leaders, church staff members, and pastors who are equipped to oversee the Stephen Ministry within our congregation. Stephen Leaders have gifts and skills in all areas such as leadership, teaching, and organizing people, along with a heart for caring ministry.

Since adopting this ministry, Sonrise CRC Stephen Ministry has quietly reached the needs of individuals in Sonrise with its unique and confidential Christian care. It currently has nine Stephen Ministers, eight of which have a Care Receiver. With over 500 hours per year of one-on-one visiting, it provides a valued way for caregivers to work their way toward wholeness and healing. Feedback received is that this ministry is a valued need that Care Receivers are very thankful for.

Stephen Ministry supports the pastor by deepening, expanding and extending the caring capacity of Sunrise CRC. Stephen ministers, alongside the pastor, and provides ongoing care for more people than the pastor can provide alone. This provides the pastor with the freedom to invest more time in other important ministry areas.

Stephen Ministers meets every three weeks for continued education and peer support. Some of this continuing education is from the Stephen Ministry workbook, however leaders also work on topics that are important to have conversations about. Topics such as; Our local Mental Health Referrals Process, The Stigma of Receiving Care, a resource called, Journeying Through Grief, Recognizing abuse in the home, and Team building activities.

Currently, they are working through a couple of books by Kenneth C. Haugk; “Don’t Sing Songs to a Heavy Heart” and “The Gift of Empathy.” Most topics begin with a video, then prepared questions to lead the discussion. Continuing education is usually 20 - 30 minutes in length. The Stephen ministers will then go to their peer support group.

In the past, leaders provided the Council with the book, “Christian Caregiving - A Way of Life” by Kenneth C. Haugk, P.h.D., who is the founder of Stephen's Ministry. The purpose is to better equip all council members in their role of understanding and communicating with those who are experiencing difficulty and to better understand the work of Stephen Ministry.

At this point, the size of the ministry is well-matched to the needs of Sunrise CRC. To meet future needs, more Stephen Ministers may be trained beginning in the Fall of this year. Training is thorough and does not only lead to providing quality care to those in need, but it also builds up ability and skill in every day relationships and interactions.

## **Serving the Community**

Our church serves the Ponoka community through different programs:

### **Christmas Program at Sunrise CRC**

Every year our church puts on a Christmas program on December 25th. A church choir, a children's choir, a praise team and a brass band put on this celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ enjoyed by a full church. A great deal of people from the local community tend to be present at this event.

### **Rising Sun Clubhouse**

The Ponoka Rising Sun Clubhouse Society strives to enable past or present consumers of mental health services to live independent and self-sufficient lives in the community. It is the endeavour of the member-operated clubhouse, therefore, to help members feel involved as part of the community through life skills and social, recreational and work activities. Our church provides supper 1- 2 times per year, this includes preparing a meal, eating and socializing with them and cleaning up.

## WE Program

What is a WE Event? WE events are based on INTER-GENERATIONAL church community building. The format makes it fun for all ages to learn and grow together as “WE” all learn about God’s covenant.

“WE” is easy to set up and use, it is interactive and social,

Our church will try this program for the first time in the evenings of July 08th, 10th, and 11th, 2024. Each night will have social interaction activities, praise and worship, storytime for all ages and a simple craft activity.

## Freezer meal program

The Sonrise CRC Freezer Meal Ministry is a “no questions asked, let us help you, know that we care” way of taking care of our neighbours in need. Volunteers gather at least twice a year to spend the day cooking and preparing freezer meals to refill the freezer at church. Anyone is welcome to take out meals and deliver them to those in our Church Family and our community at large.

## Highway Clean Up

For more than four decades, the first or second Saturday in May is Alberta Highway Clean Up Day. Covering more than 9000 kilometers (5592 miles) of roads in Alberta, roadside trash and debris face an enthusiastic Alberta spring clean crew. Alberta Transportation pays non-profit organizations and charities per kilometer of roadside cleanup. For every kilometer of trash picked, the organization receives \$100. Our Sonrise Youth participates in this annual Highway Clean Up, for about 4 hours beginning of May. They try to clean up every year around 12 km of Highway. The funds raised go towards the Youth account.



## Stepping Stones

Stepping Stones is a non-profit program of Central Alberta Youth Unlimited. A faith-based program committed to walking pregnant and parenting young women and men toward hope and wholeness. It provides breakfast, then discussion about Jesus and daily life, and encouragement, while also offering babysitting. This is a wonderful support group that many love. It is held at the First Baptist Church in Ponoka, every Thursday morning from 9:30 to 11:30 am. Our church provides one breakfast every month, this includes preparing food, serving food and cleaning up.

## Ponoka and Surrounding Community

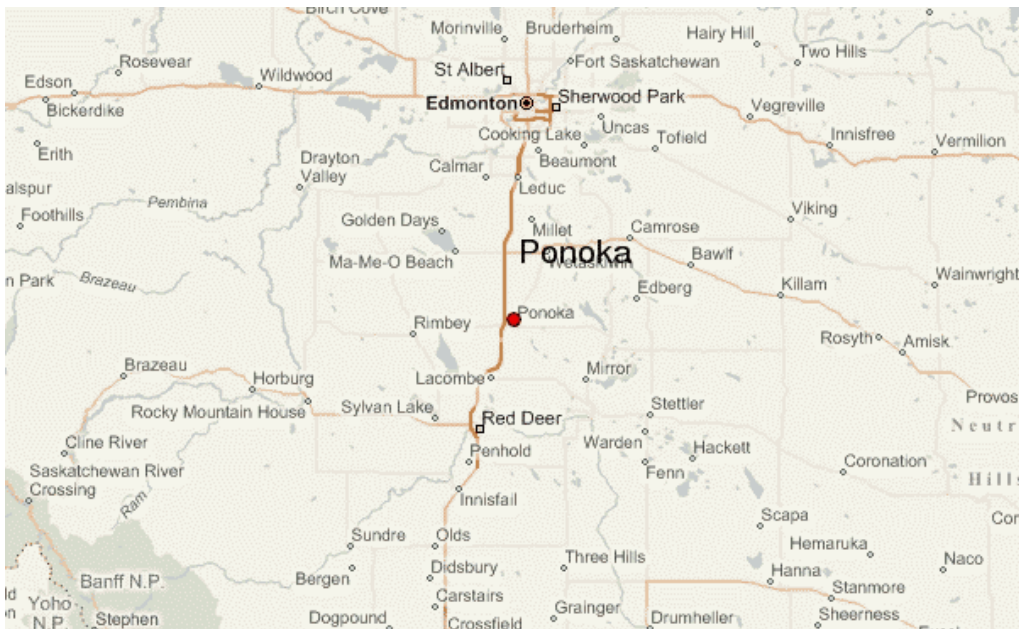
Nestled in the beautiful Battle River Valley, the Town of Ponoka is a thriving and welcoming community.

Home to more than 7,330 people (*Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population*), Ponoka is centrally located along the Highway 2 corridor, less than an hour south of the Edmonton International Airport.

Ponoka is a growing community that offers urban amenities and quality living all in a picturesque, rural setting. It's a beautiful place to raise a family, work and do business, and simply enjoy the good things in life.

Town of Ponoka video link:

<https://youtu.be/-aZERfyzQPw?list=TLGGAFebgd6q6zcyNjAzMjAyNA>





## Town of Ponoka - About Ponoka

Ponoka is a town in central Alberta, Canada. It is located at the junction of Highway 2A and Highway 53, 59 kilometres north of Red Deer and 95 kilometres south of Edmonton. The name, Ponoka, is Blackfoot for "elk", which is the animal depicted in the town flag. Ponoka County's municipal office is located in Ponoka.

Elevation: 807 m (2,648 ft)  
Country: Canada  
Province: Alberta  
Region: Central Alberta  
Census division: 8  
Municipal district: Ponoka County  
Forward sortation area: T4J

In the 2021 Census of Population conducted by Statistics Canada, the Town of Ponoka had a population of 7,331 living in 3,086 of its 3,340 total private dwellings, a change of 1.4% from its 2016 population of 7,229. With a land area of 17.22 km<sup>2</sup> (6.65 sq mi), it had a population density of 425.7/km<sup>2</sup> (1,102.6/sq mi) in 2021.<sup>[3]</sup>

## Education Choices

### Schools

Ponoka Christian School (Kindergarten - Grade 9)	(403) 783-6563 <a href="http://www.ponokachristianschool.com/">www.ponokachristianschool.com/</a>
St. Augustine School (Kindergarten-Grade 12) St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Schools Division	(403) 704-1155 <a href="http://www.staug.starcatholic.ab.ca/">www.staug.starcatholic.ab.ca/</a>
Central Alberta Christian High School (Grade 10-12) Lacombe, AB	(403) 782-5425 <a href="https://www.cachs.ca/">https://www.cachs.ca/</a>
Woodland Adventist School (Kindergarten - Grade 9)	(403) 783-2640 <a href="http://www.woodlandsadventistschool.ca/">www.woodlandsadventistschool.ca/</a>
Wolf Creek Home Education	(403) 783-3473 <a href="http://www.wolfcreek.ab.ca/parents/home-education">www.wolfcreek.ab.ca/parents/home-education</a>
The BRICK Learning Centre (Grades 10 - 12) Wolf Creek Public Schools Division	(403) 783-5464 <a href="http://www.blc.wolfcreek.ab.ca/">www.blc.wolfcreek.ab.ca/</a>
Mecca Glen School (Kindergarten-Grade 9) Wolf Creek Public Schools Division	(403) 783-2463 <a href="http://www.meccaglen.wolfcreek.ab.ca/">www.meccaglen.wolfcreek.ab.ca/</a>
Ponoka Elementary School (Kindergarten - Grade 6) Wolf Creek Public Schools Division	(403) 789-3583 <a href="http://www.pes.wolfcreek.ab.ca/">www.pes.wolfcreek.ab.ca/</a>
Ponoka Secondary Campus (Grades 7 - 12) Wolf Creek Public Schools Division	(403) 785-0741 <a href="http://www.psc.wolfcreek.ab.ca/">www.psc.wolfcreek.ab.ca/</a>



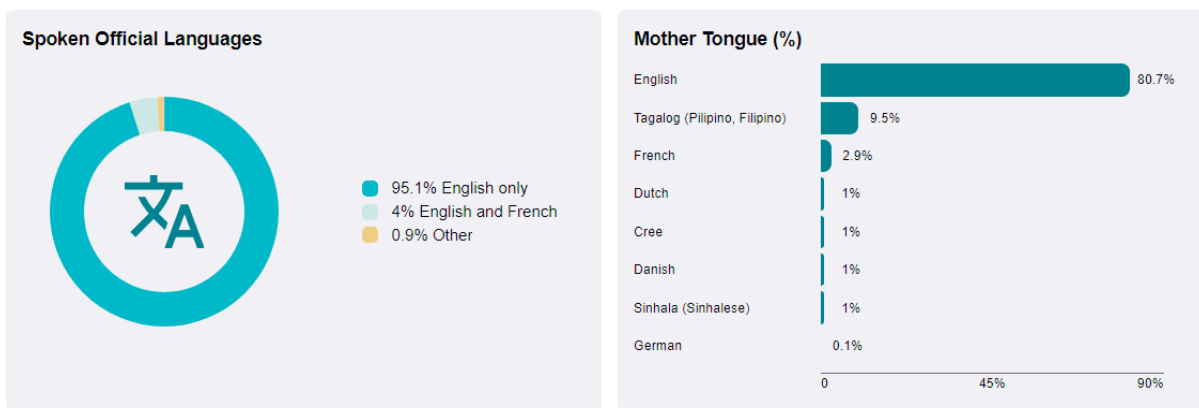
Centennial Centre Patient's School (Special Education) Wolf Creek Public Schools Division	(403) 783-7623 <a href="http://www.centennial.wolfcreek.ab.ca/">www.centennial.wolfcreek.ab.ca/</a>
Lacombe Christian School (Kindergarten - Grade 9)	5206 - 58th Str. Lacombe, AB 403-782-6531 <a href="http://www.lacs.ca">www.lacs.ca</a>

## Hospital

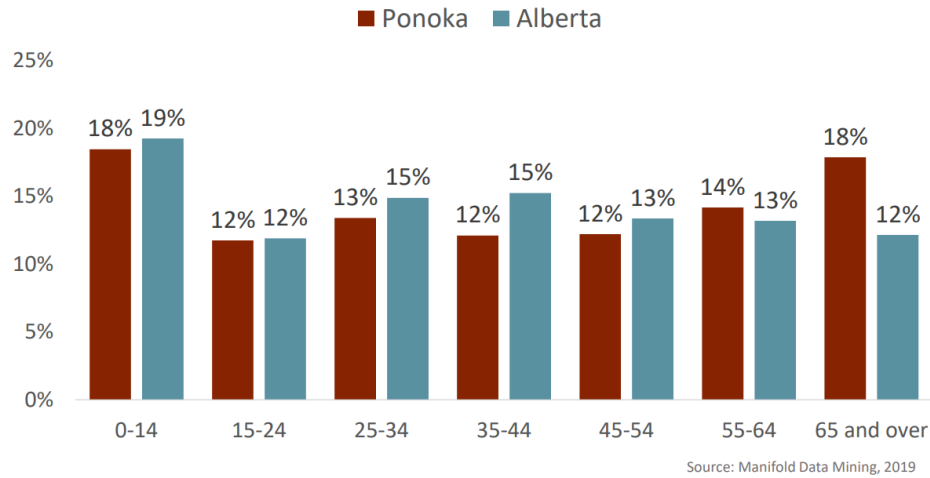
Healthcare facilities in Ponoka include the Ponoka Hospital and Care Centre, the Centennial Centre for Mental Health and Brain Injury, the Northcott Care Centre, and the Rimoka Housing Facility. The Ponoka Hospital and Care Centre is responsible for general health care, while the Centennial Centre serves as a care and treatment facility for mental health and is known for its brain injury program (the Halvar Jonson Centre for Brain Injury). The Northcott Care Centre, Rimoka Housing Facility and Seasons Retirement Community all care for the elderly, with the Northcott Care Centre focusing on care for people with disabilities and Seasons providing supportive living care.

## Ethnic Diversity

The Town of Ponoka consists of mainly caucasian English-speaking people. Because of labour shortages, many immigrants have made Ponoka home. We have roughly 10% Filipino population. Outside of the town, there are many farms operated by European people. Just to the north of town, there are 4 native reservations with a significant population.



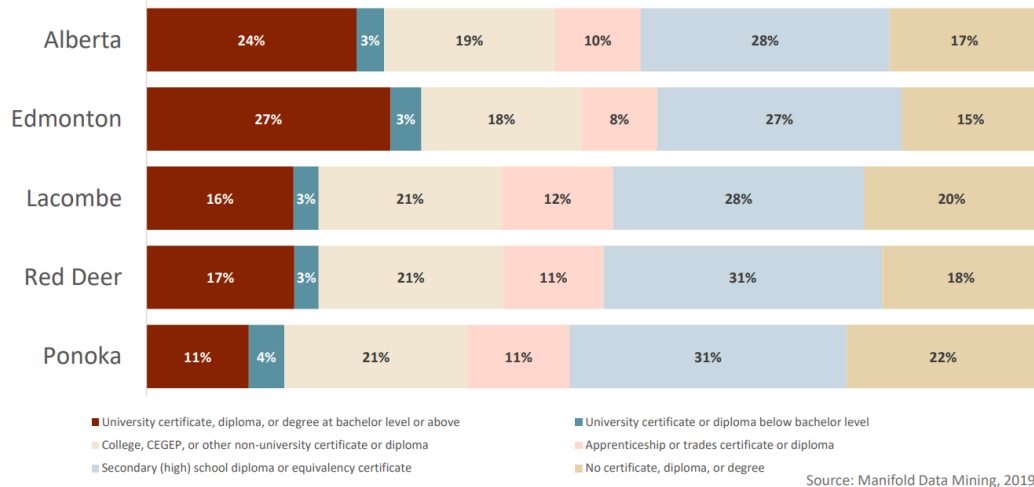
## Age Characteristics



In 2019, 37 per cent of Ponoka's population was aged 15 to 44. The median age was 40.



## Skilled Labour Force



In 2019, 78 per cent of Ponoka's labour force (aged 15 and older) had some level of education ranging from a high school diploma or equivalent to a university degree.



## Recreation

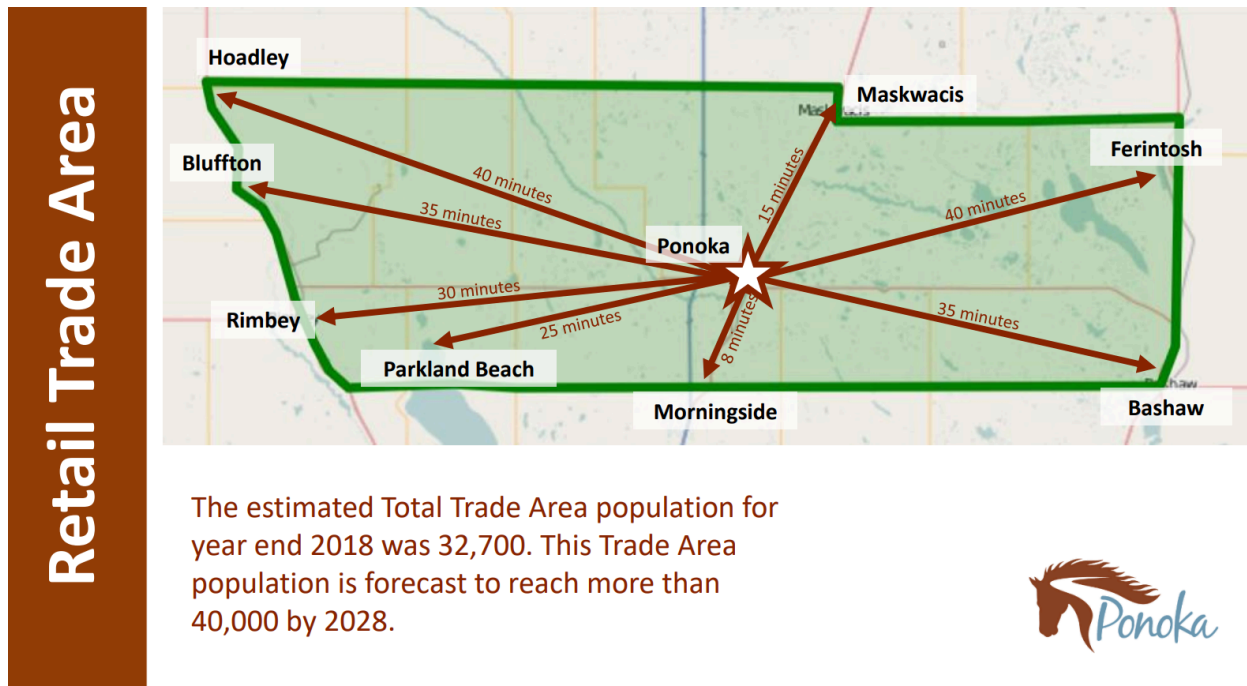
Ponoka is home to the Ponoka Stampede, a seven-day rodeo held at the end of June or beginning of July, usually coinciding with the Canada Day long weekend. This annual event is part of the Canadian Professional Rodeo Association's professional tour and features a midway and other activities. The Ponoka Stampede is a stop for the World Professional Chuckwagon

Association and the All-Pro Canadian Chuckwagons. In addition, there are several lakes within driving distance of Ponoka for summer and wintertime enjoyment.

## Industry

Industries are agriculture (grain and cattle production) and oil and gas production. Our Sonrise community is largely involved in agriculture. There are many Dairy and Poultry as well as grain Producers.

## Retail



## Contacts

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Josh Lubach

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Henry Steenbergen

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