

THE PRAISE PULSE

A PUBLICATION OF PRAISE LUTHERAN CHURCH, FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

June 2020 issue

What's inside:

- ~Reopening Details from Pastor Seth
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- ~ Spotlight of our 2020 Highschool grads!
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Congratulations 2020 Senior's of Praise Lutheran!



Congratulations to our 2020 Highschool Graduates! Tyler Delagrange, Myah Ferguson, & Seth Lehman



God's blessings on this new Journey, enjoy the ride!!!

(see inside for more info on the Grad's)



Praise Lutheran Church

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www.praiselutheran.org

May 27, 2020

Dear Friends in Christ,

I pray this finds you well and resting in the grace, mercy, and peace of God for us, in Jesus Christ.

During this most unprecedented season, following the arrival of COVID-19, we have experienced a number of changes to the ways we have approached community life in the past. Changes to Worship, congregational life in general, family schedules, employment, school, grocery shopping, and social activities are only a handful of examples from a much longer list. And yet, amidst the changes we have continued to rejoice with you in the long-standing, ever-enduring promise(s) of God:

He remains for us (Romans 8:31); He has not left us nor forsaken us (Hebrews 13:5); He has not withdrawn His love from us (Romans 8:38-39); and He remains faithful to His plan to work for the good even now (Romans 8:28).

In light of this, then, we now hear our Lord's words all the more clearly: "Do not let your hearts be troubled." (John 14:1)

These past several weeks the leadership of Praise Lutheran Church and I have kept you in our prayers while closely monitoring the present situation as it has continued to unfold. At this point in time and upon the heels of recent leadership discussions we are prepared to take the following steps towards gathering for Worship, celebrating Holy Communion, and participating in the daily life of the Church.

Phases of Reopening and Accompanying Action Steps Church

for Praise Lutheran

• Phase 1 (Present-June 14)

During Phase 1 leaders and volunteers will continue working to: secure personal protection equipment for parishioners and guests, clean our worship environment prior to onsite gatherings, modify our seating arrangement and layout to allow for social distancing while worshipping and communing, provide training for Worship volunteers, and address audio-video needs for the continuation of livestream Worship services to our parishioners and community.

Please note too the following considerations for Phase 1:

- Worship Services will be offered **online only** through our Praise Lutheran Facebook page and website (as well as other avenues currently being explored) during Phase 1.
- Gatherings or Meetings will only take place online only or via phone call.
- Church Staff will continue working remotely and will remain available for meetings, counseling, prayer, spiritual care, etc.
- Personal Protection Equipment will include the following: disposable masks, disposable gloves, disinfecting wipes, and hand sanitizer.
- Seating will be set up to accommodate 6ft spacing for rows and seat clusters (for family units and individuals alike).
- Communication will continue to parishioners and community members alike as to expectations, addressing concerns, updated timeframes, and accompanying steps.

- **Phase 2 (June 21-July 26)**

During Phase 2 Praise will take initial steps with onsite Worship Services. In an attempt to both reduce the size of our gatherings (at this point in time) and allow for visitors Praise will use the following approach:

- **Onsite Worship**

- Online access to Worship will continue through the avenues noted above.
- **Onsite Worship for households with last names beginning with A-M will be held on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month.**
- **Onsite Worship for households with last names beginning with N-Z will be held on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month.**
- The 5th Sunday of the month (as applicable) will be used for **online Worship only** (i.e. there will be no onsite gathering on the 5th Sunday of the month).
Please note too the following considerations for Phase 2 that take into account Governor Eric Holcomb's plan "Back on Track Indiana":

- No Bulletins or Handouts of any kind will be used.
- A minimal number of Leaders and Volunteers will be used during Worship Services.
- **Doors will open at 10:00am** to allow for reduced use of facility space prior to Worship as well as direction to seating prior to Worship.
- Folks will be ushered in from the Welcome Area/Narthex and towards Sanctuary seating prior to Worship.
- There will be no Meetings/Classes offered before or after Worship at this time.
- Conversations are encouraged outside before/after Worship and while observing social distancing guidelines offered by Community Health Leaders.
- At this time, there will be no organized Fellowship/Coffee/Food Gatherings before or after Worship to limit space use and ensure the cleanliness of the area for our Little Praisers ministry partners to begin their week.
- The Collection of our Tithes and Offerings will continue online as well as through designated areas near the Sanctuary's double doors on the way in/way out.
- No Sharing of the Peace, hand-shakes, hugs, elbow bumps, or physical contact of any kind will be observed at this point in time.
- At the conclusion of Worship dismissal from the Sanctuary will be directed by our ushers.
- **Facemasks will be required** inside facilities and during Worship at this point in time for leaders, volunteers, and worshippers alike. You are encouraged to bring a facemask to Worship while Church Staff secure such to be provided at a later time.
- **Facemasks will be** required inside facilities for those leading worship, those assisting during Worship (as with Distribution of Holy Communion, ushering, audio/video support), those preparing for Worship (Holy Communion preparation, Altar/Chancel arrangements, etc.), Counting ministries, and those assisting with post Worship cleaning.
- Disposable gloves and Hand Sanitizer will be made available in the Sanctuary and immediately upon entering/leaving the building.
- Per the recommendations of Community Health Leaders we ask that the following folks strongly consider staying at home and making use of our online Worship services:
 - Those who are 65 years of age and older,
 - Those with health risks and compromised health,

- Those who have been sick, have come in contact with someone presenting symptoms, and those presenting symptoms themselves.
- Congregational Singing will be reduced at this point in time to allow for a limited amount of time in our Sanctuary and shared space.
- **Holy Communion**

During the last several weeks we have not celebrated Holy Communion. This was not an easy decision. Several scenarios were entertained but did not produce options that would ensure your safety and well-being during Distribution. During Phase 2 we look forward to once again celebrating this means of grace for us in the following fashion that coincides with the onsite Worship gatherings encouraged above:

- **The 1st Sunday of the month will be used to Commune Household Groups A-M**
(Sunday June 21 will be the first available Communion Sunday for Household Groups A-M. Sunday July 5 will be the next Communion opportunity to follow).
- **The 2nd Sunday of the month will be used to Commune Household Groups N-Z**
(Sunday June 28 will be the first available Communion Sunday for Household Groups N-Z. Sunday July 12 will be the next Communion opportunity to follow).
- Communion Flow and Distribution will be modified to both allow for individual/family units to commune and to ensure social distancing and reduced standing/waiting time.
- Volunteers assisting with Distribution will be required to wear masks and gloves.
- Meditative music will be used during Distribution to reduce congregational singing.

- **Phase 3 (August 2-September 6)**

During Phase 3 Praise Lutheran will continue with the considerations laid out in Phase 2 and will reevaluate the opportunity for all households to once again: gather for onsite Worship, participate in Sunday morning Christian Education for all ages, reengage auxiliary ministries, and attend onsite meetings. Leadership will continue to monitor the changes within our community and will provide timely communication to our congregation and community as to changes that may need to occur.

In close, please know that the previously outlined steps and thoughts have been prayerfully identified with your well-being mind. We understand that no plan will offer a “one size fits all” solution and that upon reading this plan some may still seek to self-quarantine and/or social distance until a later time. That decision is okay, and we support you in Christian love while looking forward to the time when we can once again come together.

Moving forward we invite everyone to continue making use of our online Worship services, the Church Staff's/Leadership's availability via phone/email, the Congregational Needs Survey, the Reopening Considerations Survey, and our ministry partners¹ so that we may continue our service of Christlike compassion and care to you and those in need.

Through His Holy Spirit and Word, God enables us to stand firm no matter the season. To that end, may you remain steadfast, immovable, and abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor in the Lord is never in vain (1 Corinthians 15:58).

On behalf of the Leadership at Praise Lutheran Church who are prayerfully seeking your good (1 Corinthians 10:24),

Pastor Seth Korte
Senior Pastor

¹ Cross Connections Christian Counseling (260)373-0213. At the present time Cross Connections is blessed to offer free Biblical counseling to healthcare professionals and their immediate family members through the Serve our Servants (SOS) Fund. Please contact Cross Connections for more information.

Praise AV, music, and technology update - From Josh Gumbert.

Greetings from the other side of the screen! It has been an uphill battle, but we are steadily rising to the challenge that the pandemic has brought us. Although challenging, we have found an amazing opportunity to reach a larger part of our community through live streaming.

At the beginning of the year, we had our new AV equipment successfully installed. This included a new computer, soundboard, new projectors, acoustic sound proofing, and a couple other smaller items. Because we were able to make this \$20,000 AV upgrade happen, we set ourselves up for success during these trying times. However, there is now a few more items we need to improve the quality of our broadcast. Luckily, we have been blessed by a couple of anonymous donors, and we will be able to make these improvements soon. We are currently applying for a new technology grant as well, which will help with these unexpected costs. The grant is through the center for congregations. We should know within the month of June whether we are awarded the grant. With this money, we will be purchasing necessary licensing and software subscriptions, as well as a new camera, video mixer, and a few other pieces of video gear.

The AV department is becoming an evermore critical ministry for Praise, as the need for an online and digital presence increases exponentially. As we experience these growing pains, we will very quickly need more volunteers to continue with our growth. We recently added a new team member to the AV department, Nick Longworth. He has already begun training with us and we are very excited to have him on board!

If you have any questions about what is happening in our ministry, or if you or someone you know might be interested in volunteering, please contact me by email at joshuagumbert@gmail.com, or by phone or text at 260-494-6463.

On a final note, I wanted to take this opportunity to speak from the heart, and tell you all that I love you, and I miss you, and I can't wait for us all to be together again! Although we may not be able to see each other physically, I believe God is giving us both an amazing opportunity to grow, and all the tools we need to stay connected as a Praise family. I want to encourage all of you to not only watch our live stream services on Facebook, but engage with us, engage with each other, tell us a funny story about your week, share your needs with us, pray with us, pray with and encourage each other, and most importantly, LOVE each other! We are all in this together!
With ALL the love, your brother in Christ,

Josh Gumbert
260-494-6463
joshuagumbert@gmail.com

Brothers and Sisters,

Eric and I are so incredibly grateful that we have been able to serve you and serve with you over the last two years! In this time, we have truly come to consider you all as family. We will miss getting to gather with you regularly, but will continue to pray for you all as our family in Christ.



Though we are sad to leave Praise, we are very excited to get the opportunity to serve the congregation of Faith Lutheran in Green Bay, Wisconsin! We hope that you will continue to remember us in your prayers as Eric serves his vicarage in Green Bay. God's greatest blessings to you all.

Love,
Becca and Eric Souer

2020 Highschool Graduates of Praise Lutheran Church:

Myah Ferguson



Shane and Jennifer Anderson announce with great pride the graduation of their daughter, Myah Lynn Ferguson, from Concordia Lutheran High School. While at CLHS, she excelled in art and photography where she received a gold key award, a silver key award, and an honorable mention award for three of her photography projects during her senior year. She was vice-president of the Art Club and loved serving with the youth at Praise Lutheran Church. Myah will spend the summer working at Kohl's and working on her skills in photography and art. In the fall, she plans on attending photography and business management

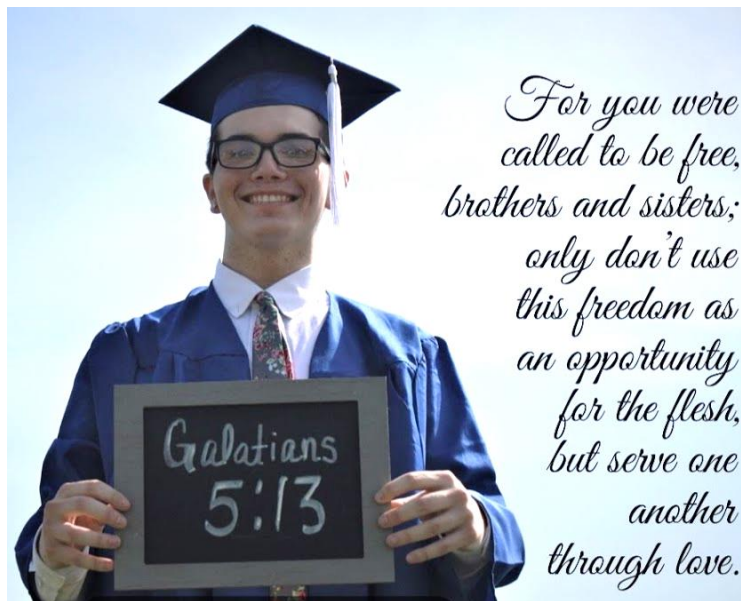
classes part-time at Purdue University Fort Wayne. She plans to pursue her dream of being a photographer and hopes to open her own photography business in the Fort Wayne area in the future.

All Praise Lutheran Church members are invited to join us for a graduation party at Praise Lutheran Church on July 19, 2020 from 12:00pm – 3:00pm. If you are unable to attend, Myah would still love to hear from you! Any words of encouragement as she starts this new chapter of her life can be sent to

1645 Fairhill RD., Fort Wayne, IN 46808.

Thank you so much for your continued support and God's blessings to all of you!

Seth Lehman



For you were called to be free, brothers and sisters; only don't use this freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but serve one another through love.

Seth Lehman graduated from Carroll High School. He has been very involved in Champions Together which is a collaborative partnership between the Indiana High School Athletic Association and Special Olympics Indiana that promotes servant leadership among student athletes while changing their lives as well as the lives of those with intellectual disabilities. He was also a leader of FCA, Fellowship of Christian Athletes Club. He plans to go to Purdue -Ft. Wayne and major in Secondary Education. He also has aspirations to pursue ministry in the future.

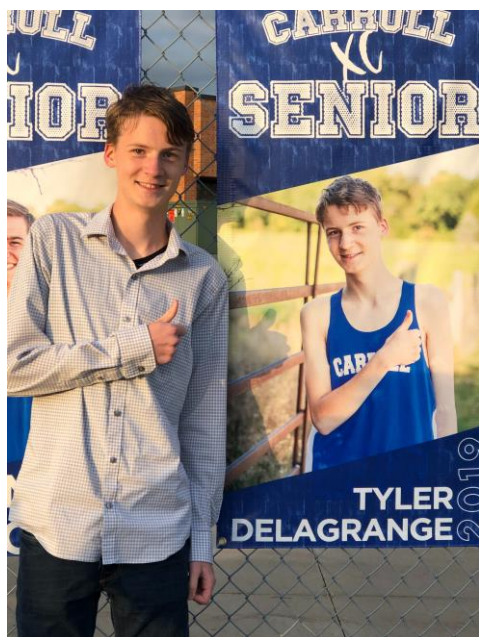
Dear friends,

You are welcome to stop by at Seth's Open House on June 6th anytime between noon and 4PM to congratulate him on his High School Graduation.

It will take place at the American Legion Post 47, 601 Reed Rd. Fort Wayne.

Or if you would like to drop a note to him, his address is 731 Misty Court, Fort Wayne, IN 45845
The Lehmans

Tyler Delagrang



We, Mitch and Mindy, are excited to announce the graduation of our son, Tyler James Delagrang, from Carroll High School. Tyler was on the Cross Country team for all four years, enjoys playing the guitar, is a gaming enthusiast, and hopes to one day get a job in the video game industry. He is starting his college career this fall at PFW.

If you would like to send a card to wish him well, please send it to: 10601 Still Hollow Run
Ft. Wayne, IN 46818

Please include some advice for him as he starts a new journey of his life.

Stained Glass Window Update

We received word that the Lutheran Foundation has granted funding for the stained glass window behind the altar. This has been a lengthy and heartfelt project which with God's blessings and guidance we should see completed soon. The committee is working on getting some dates and a projected time frame for completion. Thank you to all who have contributed to this project through the years. More info will be coming.

~The Stained Glass Committee



~A Huge Thank you to, Mary Voorhees, for her leadership in getting this Grant from Lutheran Foundation approved so Praise can complete the Stained Glass Window Project behind the Altar! We all appreciate your hard work here so much!

Volunteers Needed

25 yards of Mulch needs spread around the Church Campus and we need your help!

June 27th @ 9 a.m.

- Refreshments provided & much needed fellowship

Bring if you have:

Wheelbarrow(s)

Rakes

Pitchfork

Shovels

And anything else that come in handy spreading mulch

Please wear:

Comfortable working clothes

Gloves

And **please wear a Mask**(for the dust if for nothing else;) one will be provided if you don't have one, but if you have your own to wear please do so.



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC

Please take some pictures if you think about it. I would love to include some photos in our announcements and Newsletters of the people of Praise serving The Lord in all the ways they do for the church. Email them to me at office@praiselutheran.org

Little Praisers' Updates

Summer camp is starting June 1st and we are very excited! We have many new families that have enrolled specifically for Summer Camp, so it is shaping up to be a great summer. Also, the repainting of the center is almost complete! We have just a couple classrooms left to finish and then we just have to conquer the classroom bathrooms. We are so thankful for the team of teachers that have been spending their time completing the painting, they have done a wonderful job. As always, we ask for continued prayers for filling teaching positions as we have a few left that we need to fill.

Coming soon: Due to budget cuts caused by the Covid crisis, our classroom teachers are working on Amazon Wish Lists in order for us to supply our classrooms with much needed educational materials for the upcoming school year. If you are interested in contributing, you will be able to browse our wish lists then make purchase selections that would be delivered right to our door. As always, we are grateful for your generosity to the Preschool and Child Care center.